

# **Stanley Kubrick:**

## **Producers and Production Companies**

Thesis submitted by

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# Abstract

This doctoral thesis examines filmmaker Stanley Kubrick's role as a producer and the impact of the industrial contexts upon the role and his independent production companies. The thesis represents a significant intervention into the understanding of the much-misunderstood role of the producer by exploring how business, management, working relationships and financial contexts influenced Kubrick's methods as a producer. The thesis also shows how Kubrick contributed to the transformation of industrial practices and the role of the producer in Hollywood, particularly in areas of legal authority, promotion and publicity, and distribution. The thesis also assesses the influence and impact of Kubrick's methods of producing and the structure of his production companies in the shaping of his own reputation and brand of cinema.

The thesis takes a case study approach across four distinct phases of Kubrick's career. The first is Kubrick's early years as an independent filmmaker, in which he made two privately funded feature films (1951-1955). The second will be an exploration of the Harris-Kubrick Pictures Corporation and its affiliation with Kirk Douglas' Bryna Productions (1956-1962). Thirdly, the research will examine Kubrick's formation of Hawk Films and Polaris Productions in the 1960s (1962-1968), with a deep focus on the latter and the vital role of vice-president of the company. Finally, the research will move to examine the Jan Harlan years (1975-1999), a period in which Kubrick's production rate slowed markedly.

The thesis utilises the methodological framework of the New Film History and draws heavily on archival material. It also develops the historiography of Kubrick, the American film industry, and the role of the producer, with significant critical engagement with the work of Peter Krämer, Robert Sklar, and Andrew Spicer. Asking what Kubrick's role was as a producer allows for a fuller understanding of the way in which he obtained control of his productions, as well as the industrial limitations and constraints in which he produced (or failed to produce) his films.

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And finally a big thank you to the staff of the Soar Point: there was always a cold Blue Moon waiting.

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## Notes On Text

Where the website [boxofficemojo.com](http://boxofficemojo.com) is referred to for box office figures, this is indicated in text by only the website name for presentation purposes. Full URL references can be found in the bibliography. Similarly, this applies to the website [creativeskillset.org](http://creativeskillset.org). Where email correspondence is cited, this will be indicated in text. British spelling is used throughout, except in quotations where American spelling is used. Years of release are given only on the first mention of a film, with an alphabetised filmography giving full details.

# Introduction

Following his time spent as director on the historical epic *Spartacus* (1960), Stanley Kubrick (1928-1999) tried to put as much distance as possible between him and the film, seeing it as decidedly un-Kubrickian. Speaking over a decade later, Kubrick said that the key lesson he took from the production was the need for what he called legal authority: ‘If you don’t have legal authority, you don’t have any authority at all’ (Zimmerman 1972: 32). The legal authority on *Spartacus* resided with its producers, the all-powerful Hollywood actor-producer Kirk Douglas (who also played the eponymous tragic-hero), and the Bryna Productions producer, Edward Lewis, with Kubrick being a director-for-hire after the firing of Anthony Mann just two weeks into the shoot. To ensure Kubrick kept in line, the film’s financial backer, Universal, assigned an assistant director, Marshall Green, to keep a watchful eye over Kubrick and to make certain he kept to schedule (LoBrutto 1997: 181). Universal and the film’s producers were making it clear that Kubrick had no legal authority. By 1961, Kubrick was sitting with his lawyer, Louis C. Blau, and Kirk Douglas negotiating his way out of his contract with Douglas’s Bryna Productions (193), with the intent of continuing his ‘ongoing quest for ever greater control’ (229) – to be his own producer.

And being his own producer Kubrick was, from 1963 onwards with the dissolving of the Harris-Kubrick Pictures Corporation (HKPC), a nearly seven-year long partnership with producer James B. Harris that had taken Kubrick into the heart of Hollywood and eventually across to the United Kingdom. Kubrick took the credit of producer for each of his subsequent films from *Dr. Strangelove or: How I Learned to Stop Worrying and Love the Bomb* (1964) through to *Eyes Wide Shut* (1999). However, the producer’s role on a Kubrick production is somewhat more complex than a cursory glance at the credits suggests. Though Kubrick always received a producer credit between 1964 and 1999, throughout his career he was either supervised or assisted by a variety of executive producers (most prominently Jan Harlan for over thirty years from the 1970s onwards), co-producers, and associate producers (see figure 1).



<b>Film</b>	<b>Producers</b>	<b>Co Producers</b>	<b>Associate Producers</b>	<b>Executive Producers</b>
<i>Day of the Fight</i> (1951)	Burton Benjamin Stanley Kubrick			
<i>Flying Padre</i> (1951)	Burton Benjamin			
<i>The Seafarers</i> (1953)	Lester Cooper			
<i>Fear and Desire</i> (1953)	Stanley Kubrick		Martin Perveler	
<i>Killer's Kiss</i> (1955)	Stanley Kubrick Morris Bousel			
<i>The Killing</i> (1956)	James B. Harris			
<i>Paths of Glory</i> (1957)	James B. Harris			
<i>Spartacus</i> (1960)	Edward Lewis			Kirk Douglas
<i>Lolita</i> (1962)	James B. Harris			Eliot Hyman
<i>Dr. Strangelove</i> (1964)	Stanley Kubrick		Victor Lyndon	
<i>2001: A Space Odyssey</i> (1968)	Stanley Kubrick		Victor Lyndon	
<i>A Clockwork Orange</i> (1971)	Stanley Kubrick		Bernard Williams	Si Litvinoff Max L. Raab
<i>Barry Lyndon</i> (1975)	Stanley Kubrick		Bernard Williams	Jan Harlan
<i>The Shining</i> (1980)	Stanley Kubrick		Mary Lea Johnson Robert Fryer Martin Richards	Jan Harlan
<i>Full Metal Jacket</i> (1987)	Stanley Kubrick	Philip Hobbs	Michael Herr	Jan Harlan
<i>Eyes Wide Shut</i> (1999)	Stanley Kubrick	Brian W. Cook		Jan Harlan

Figure 1: List of credited producers on films that Stanley Kubrick directed 1951-1999

Some of these individuals merely received a credit due to their association with the literary property that was being adapted, as was the case on both *A Clockwork Orange* and *The Shining*. Both these films list executive producers and associate producers who were the prior owners of the property and in return for their selling the titles they received these producing credits.

This thesis considers how the role of the producer changed throughout the course of Kubrick's career and asks what Kubrick's role was as a producer on his films. In addition, it will seek to understand in what way he impacted or changed the role more generally. These central research questions will situate the producing role, and Kubrick's films, within the wider industrial contexts of the American film industry from

the 1950s through to the 1990s. The research will adopt a case study methodology and look at four distinct phases in Kubrick's career: his early years as a guerrilla independent producer (approximately 1951-1955); the Harris-Kubrick Pictures Corporation years (approximately 1955-1963); the Polaris Production years (approximately 1962-1968); and the Jan Harlan years (approximately 1968-1999). These case studies will consider the role of the producer during these time periods as well as the production companies Kubrick either owned or worked for.

### **Thesis Context**

This study was born out of a Master's degree research project that explored the specifics of the aesthetic that has come to be labelled Kubrickian. My own Stanley Kubrick fandom, along with a continuing appreciation for his films, influenced that project like this one. At the same time, I grew frustrated while undertaking the Master's dissertation at the seemingly narrow academic understanding of who Stanley Kubrick was as a producer and his role within the film industry. It was apparent that scholarly attention had long been fixated on the textual and formal analysis of his thirteen features. Readings of his films were becoming ever more microscopic and speculative, attempting to derive the finesse of Kubrick's hand in every frame – nay, every object within a frame of his film. Some of the academic theories were becoming just as outlandish as those posited by his fans of a more conspiratorial persuasion. See, for instance, Geoffrey Cocks's *The Wolf at the Door* (2007), a compelling study that at times sees recourse to an imaginative interpretation of the Holocaust subtexts in Kubrick's work. This is particularly the case with Cocks's reading of a scene in *Eyes Wide Shut*: 'Cruise falls against [a] blue Mercedes-Benz. The choice of car against which Cruise stumbles [...] is anything but an idle one [...] It is images such as these in the cinema of Stanley Kubrick [...] that confirm a preoccupation with the Holocaust' (1-2).

The work of scholars like Cocks is not without merit. The way he situates Kubrick's films within the context of twentieth century history speaks to the director's persistent intellectual and aesthetic concerns. But what it fails to recognise are the wider industrial conditions in which Kubrick operated. Not only was Kubrick a film director (artist), but also a producer (businessman). Kubrick Studies is now moving away from

the auteurist constraints of old, toward new perspectives, to coin the title of the recently published edited collection *Stanley Kubrick New Perspectives* (Ljujić, Krämer and Daniels 2015), which utilises the Stanley Kubrick Archive donated to the University of the Arts London. These new perspectives aim to understand the production contexts of Kubrick's films, the cultural and industrial constraints within which they were created, and to understand the collaborative nature of their making. But still many of these studies remain limited to understanding Kubrick as a director. If, as Andrew Spicer (2004) has claimed, the role of the producer in film studies has been neglected, then Stanley Kubrick's role as a producer has been absolutely forgotten by film historians. The old Kubrick Studies, with its traditional textual and formal analysis of the content of Kubrick's films, typically fails to situate Kubrick's career within an industry that was in constant flux throughout his career, stretching as it did across the tumultuous decades of the 1950s through to the 1990s and witness to tremendous change and upheaval in the American and British film industries.

Leading the vanguard in the burgeoning area of Producer Studies is Andrew Spicer, who sets out the importance of understanding the role of the producer, which allows us 'not simply a business history of film, but a cultural history of creativity in an industrial/commercial context' with the film industry being situated 'within a wider framework of entrepreneurial activity' (Spicer 2010: 23). By analysing Kubrick's role as a producer, and the production companies he operated, we can begin to uncover the modes of production and the constraints being imposed by the industrial and production contexts of an industry in perpetual flux. It also lends consideration to how Kubrick was able to amass absolute control of the business and creative functions of his films by the 1970s.

Kubrick's role as a supposed maniacal, all-controlling director is well chronicled, to the point of becoming mythologized. The stories of countless re-takes are legendary. The way that Kubrick 'terrorised' actors is best demonstrated by the way he treats Shelley Duvall on the set of *The Shining* (1980). Kubrick's behaviour towards Duvall is glimpsed in the behind-the-scenes documentary *Making the Shining* (1980). In it we repeatedly see Kubrick shout at Duvall for missing her cues. In fact, this documentary plays a central role in the cultification of Kubrick-the-director, with both the director's work and his image becoming 'cultish forms of consumption and

appreciation’ (Egan 2015: 8). The documentary has contributed to Kubrick’s status as a cult-auteur, with the film acting as a paratext that Kubrick fans have come to view as an ‘intimate home movie of Kubrick at work’ (Church 2006: 10).

The status of Kubrick as a cult-auteur figure hardened into orthodoxy in part also due to the lengthening gaps between his films and his ‘withdrawal’ from public life, which gained him the label of recluse and hermit (McAvoy 2015: 282). This orthodoxy, which has also come to dominate within academia and the wider cultural sphere, is detrimental and narrows our full understanding of the contexts of production on a Stanley Kubrick film. In fact, the auteur ideology is so strongly linked with Kubrick as to have developed into a cult of personality, as David Church argues, saying that with Kubrick ‘there are clear parallels between the phenomenon of cult movie celebration and the “cult of personality” surrounding his role as auteur. The “cult of personality” formed by auteurism builds legends around filmmakers’ (2006). This is not to suggest this thesis is somehow anti-auteur. On the contrary, it is very much an auteur focused piece of research, but it aims to debunk the cult of personality that the auteur theory brings with it and has especially attached itself to Kubrick. By focusing on the role of the producer, it aims to take a far more realistic and pragmatic approach to understanding Kubrick as a filmmaker working within a profit-orientated industry. Far from being a hermit, Kubrick had to interact with a range of businessmen, studio executives, producers, screenwriters, technicians, bureaucrats, administrators, and union bodies in order to realise his films. Kubrick was also constantly subject to complex contracts with studios and financiers throughout his career, even beyond his death when a Kubrick production was still contractually obliged to deliver an R-rated film in the form of *Eyes Wide Shut* (Harlan 2005: 513). These contracts are a key primary source to this thesis.

It is only now, nearly two decades after his death in March 1999 and with the donation of his personal archive to the University of the Arts London in 2007, that we can start to uncover the modes of production and working practices involved on his productions. This will potentially lead to the ‘image of Kubrick as a “reclusive” “control freak” and a “tyrant” [being] challenged when considering the evidence’ (McAvoy 2015: 282). The archival sources that are now available to Kubrick scholars need to be used to illuminate new perspectives on his work and working methods. In the

case of this thesis, this means his forgotten role as a producer and the roles of the producers that worked with him. But before looking to the historical contexts of the producer and any attempt at defining the role, it is important to first provide a brief biographical contextualisation of Kubrick's career.

### **Biographical Context**

The most comprehensive biographical account of Stanley Kubrick is Vincent LoBrutto's *Stanley Kubrick* (1997). LoBrutto's biography is useful in beginning to understand Kubrick's working methods as a filmmaker. Still, many gaps exist in the narrative that LoBrutto constructs of Kubrick's life and work, particularly with regards to the specifics of his role as a producer. Its primary utilisation for this thesis is as a reference guide to Kubrick's career progress, though there are many areas in which this research intervenes and revises LoBrutto's account, especially around areas of contract negotiations and how Kubrick substantially impacted on the development of the producer's role within the industry between the 1950s and 1970s. A number of other published resources are also available (John Baxter (1998) for instance) but they are limited in their scope and take a much more anecdotal (and salacious, in the case of Baxter) approach.

Kubrick was born on 26 July 1928 in New York City and was raised in the borough of the Bronx (Parkinson 2004). His parents, Jack Kubrick and Gertrude Kubrick née Perveler, were both the children of Jewish immigrants. They raised Stanley and his sister, Barbara, born in 1934, in an unassuming apartment block on the Bronx's Clinton Avenue, part of the fairly affluent 15<sup>th</sup> congressional district (Kubrick 2002: 24). Kubrick displayed very little academic ability and spurned his parents' attempts to steer him towards a career in medicine (31). Instead, Kubrick became fascinated with photography from a young age after his father gifted him a camera (Mather 2013: 15-16). His self-taught abilities soon found him being recruited to work for *Look* magazine. Philippe Mather has provided an in-depth account of this period in his *Stanley Kubrick at Look Magazine* (2013), which takes a psychosocial approach to understand the formative impact Kubrick's time working for *Look* had on his later career, as well as the influence of contemporaries such as Arthur 'Weegee' Fellig and Diane Arbus (15). LoBrutto has said that Kubrick was fascinated by the crime photographs of Weegee,

describing the photographer's grotesque style as that of a social caricaturist (1997: 12). By the late 1940s, Kubrick was living in New York's Greenwich Village, earning a living by playing chess in Washington Square Park (78). Similar to the impact of *Look* on his career, Nathan Abrams in his own psychosocial history of Kubrick suggests that residing in Greenwich Village saw him living 'contemporaneously with that generation of writers, poets, essayists and literary critics who came to be known as the New York Intellectual "family"' (2015a: 64).

It was also an important period in his life in which he became deeply acquainted with European art house cinema (Cocks 2004: 50-51). Kubrick, as James Naremore describes, nourished his cinephilia with 'regular attendance at New York art theatres and the Museum of Modern Art' (2007: 12). It was here that he learned the 'technique' of cinema, particularly around editing and montage, backed up with reading Pudovkin's *Film Technique* (1929) (Walker 1972: 15). He was very much enamoured with the films of Fritz Lang, Sergei Eisenstein and, most of all, Max Ophuls (Cocks 2004: 54-57). Kubrick was ambitious and longed to make a feature film (Phillips 2016: 22). He applied his knowledge of photography and what he learnt from attending the cinema to make his first short film, *Day of the Fight* (1951), a documentary for RKO that followed boxer Walter Cartier in the build up to a boxing match. The production saw Kubrick perform virtually all of the crew roles, 'from writing and shooting the film to dubbing in the punches and the slams of car doors on the soundtrack' (Phillips 2016: 22-23). He was even talked through the technical aspects of how to shoot a film by an employee at the camera rental store (23). Kubrick's significance in the development of American independent cinema is often overlooked in wider film historiography, despite, as Naremore argues, that 'Kubrick can legitimately claim the distinction of being the first American director of an entirely independent art film in the post-World War II era' (2007: 12). Kubrick's role as an independent filmmaker, producing films in an almost guerrilla style, is the first major intervention this thesis makes.

*Fear and Desire* (1953), a feature-length war picture produced by Kubrick under the auspices of the nepotistic sounding production company 'Kubrick Family', was made with finances provided by the film's associate producer, Martin Perveler (Phillips and Hill 2002: 287-288). It was a film Kubrick would go to great lengths to distance himself from in later years due to its dubious aesthetic quality. Because of its guerrilla

filmmaking circumstances, Kubrick was forced to take on many of the major roles, including director, cinematographer and editor. In addition, Kubrick directed two other short films, *The Flying Padre* (1951) and *The Seafarers* (1953), during this period. But with *Fear and Desire* he had become one of the pioneers of modern independent filmmaking and would have to work under similar low-budget conditions on his next feature, *Killer's Kiss* (1955).

Around this time, Kubrick formed his first serious business venture, the production company Harris-Kubrick Pictures Corporation, in partnership with the wealthy television distributor James B. Harris, who invested large amounts of his own fortune into the company. HKPC had a number of projects in development at any one time, by which means they could try to ensure that one of them received financing 'from a major studio or one of the big independent production companies' (Krämer 2015a: 54). The exact organisational structure of HKPC has not been explored in current literature, with little indication of whether the partnership saw a complete separation of business and creative functions. Harris has said in interviews that he believed Kubrick needed someone to deal with 'practical problems, everything from financing to distribution so that Kubrick could be left in peace to create' (Krämer 2015a: 54). But the company was an equal partnership and this thesis makes another intervention into the historiography on Kubrick with a case study of HKPC, its managerial organisation, and the working relationship between Harris and Kubrick.

The duo's eventual first project made together was the heist crime drama *The Killing* (1956), adapted from Lionel White's *Clean Break* (1955) and renamed presumably to give it more commercial potential. Harris was the film's producer and Alexander Singer was given an associate producer credit for his part in bringing the pair together. HKPC next worked on an adaptation of Humphrey Cobb's *Paths of Glory* (1937) (between other unrealised projects) with the agent, Ronnie Lubin, sending the script to Kirk Douglas (LoBrutto 1997: 133-34). It was at this point that the company signed a deal with Douglas's Bryna Productions in order to get Douglas to star in *Paths of Glory* (1957). The producing credits for *Paths of Glory* betrayed the political tension between Douglas, Harris and Kubrick; Harris received the sole producing credit, while Douglas's Bryna Productions was credited as the production company. This thesis illuminates and provides new original perspectives on this period of collaboration

between HKPC and Bryna, drawing on under utilised archival material from the Kirk Douglas Papers at the Wisconsin Historical Society.

The collaboration never resulted in any further productions between HKPC and Bryna, but it did see the loaning out of Kubrick to direct *Spartacus*. The film saw Kubrick deprived of artistic control, but ‘Harris and Kubrick decided that Kubrick’s involvement on *Spartacus* would be beneficial for their production company’ (LoBrutto 1997: 174). As the duo aimed to establish themselves within Hollywood, reputation was everything and therefore there was more to gain than to lose from Kubrick directing one of the most expensive pictures ever produced by Universal. But the experience was frustrating for Kubrick and it taught him the valuable lesson that he should retain producing power on all of his future films. The contract between Bryna Productions and HKPC was soon brought to an end, with the company released from the commitment to Douglas on 15 December 1961 (LoBrutto 1997: 193).

In the intervening years since *Paths of Glory*, Harris had been striving to obtain an option on Vladimir Nabokov’s *Lolita* (1955) and had negotiated a two-year option with Nabokov’s agent, including the agreement that Nabokov would write the screenplay (Parkinson 2004). To secure the money for the deal, HKPC sold the rights to their first feature, *The Killing*, to United Artists. HKPC approached numerous studios to finance *Lolita* (1962), very nearly striking a deal with Warner Bros.; that is until they saw the contracts drawn up for them (Anon. 1959h: 17). Kubrick was adamant that he would not repeat the mistakes of the contract with Bryna. He wanted absolute control over his productions, but the contract with Warner Bros. granted the studio final approval on most areas of *Lolita* and such handing over of power was not acceptable to Kubrick’s methods as a filmmaker (17). Harris was subsequently able to strike a deal with Seven Arts to finance *Lolita* with the intention of producing it in a country where production costs could be reduced (Corliss 1994: 52). The film was made in the UK in order to qualify for the so-called Eady Levy, a government subsidy paid out by the British Film Fund Agency (Fenwick 2017a: 191-199). This was the beginning of Kubrick’s eventual permanent relocation to the country, with the rest of his pictures from then on being produced in the United Kingdom. It was also the last film made by HKPC. Even though trade press adverts in 1963 initially advertised Harris as being the producer of *Dr. Strangelove*, HKPC was amicably dissolved in 1963.



Kubrick became his own producer for the remainder of his career. He also incorporated two significant production companies at this time, Polaris Productions and Hawk Films. This thesis provides the first comprehensive exploration of Polaris, a company that was central to Kubrick's struggle for producing power in the 1960s. But though Kubrick received the producing credit for *Dr. Strangelove*, he hired an associate producer, Victor Lyndon, a partnership that would see out the 1960s. Kubrick would in effect have a deputy producer on all of his features, a role that was eventually taken up by Jan Harlan, who would receive executive producer credits from *Barry Lyndon* through to *Eyes Wide Shut*. These deputies took care of what Harlan has described as being the administrative aspect of the producer on a Kubrick production: 'my job was to make deals, to negotiate, to get permissions, to hire people, to do what was wanted' (Appendix II).

The same producing line-up of Kubrick, Lyndon, Hawk Films and Polaris Productions remained in place on *2001: A Space Odyssey* (1968), with the film financed and distributed by Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer. *2001* was loosely adapted from Arthur C. Clarke's *The Sentinel* (1951) and *Expedition to Earth* (1953).<sup>1</sup> Loosely because, as I.Q. Hunter states, the film 'is *not* an adaptation. The end credits on screen simply read, 'Based on a screenplay by Stanley Kubrick and Arthur C. Clarke', and no other source text is mentioned' (2013: 43). Clarke wrote a novel in parallel to the production of the film, but was prevented from publishing until the film was released – an unusual move given the potential to presell the film through sales of the novel. Still, Kubrick received a percentage of all sequel novels and film rights to *2001: A Space Odyssey* (LoBrutto 263-264). This latter point would cause legal consternation in ensuing years, with producer Julia Phillips being denied (initially) the rights to produce the film's sequel, *2010* (1984), based on Clarke's *2010: Odyssey Two* (Anon. 1982a: 3).

The making of *2001: A Space Odyssey*, from pre-production through to distribution, offers numerous research avenues into Kubrick's workings as a producer. LoBrutto reveals some of the aspects of Kubrick's managerial style, with Kubrick working out of 'mission control', where he 'sat behind his desk at command central signing letters and making countless phone calls while approving and rejecting choices

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<sup>1</sup> Later renamed *Encounter in the Dawn*.

of costumes, props, and spacecraft and slavishly examining endless production details’ (1997: 283). This isn’t so much the image of a director sitting on a folding chair with a megaphone, but more of a high-level bureaucrat. Kubrick’s mission control was a room where he could monitor the production at all times and allowed him ‘to rearrange scheduling, equipment, staff, the script, data, and shooting days to suit the growing artistic demands of the film. Punch cards and every filing system then available was used to track the twenty-four-hour-a-day production schedule’ (281). Intriguingly, Victor Lyndon revealed in an interview with LoBrutto that Kubrick delegated power, ‘but only on the non-creative side of the film and even then he checks and double checks. The creative side is entirely in his hands’ (240). As Chapter Four of this thesis demonstrates, Kubrick was a micromanager, to the point of frustrating his own production process.

From 1970 onwards, Kubrick commenced a partnership with Warner Bros. that would last to the end of his career. The exact arrangements of the relationship between Kubrick and Warner Bros. are ambiguous, though archival documents reveal the extent to which they allowed Kubrick absolute freedom and control of his projects, both in terms of producing and directing (see Chapter Five). Kubrick turned to an adaptation of Anthony Burgess’s *A Clockwork Orange* (1962) for his next project. The film was a huge box office success, just like *2001*. Reflecting his critical and commercial success, Kubrick received offers to direct *The Exorcist* (1973) and an adaptation of Albert Speer’s *Inside the Third Reich* (1969) (LoBrutto 1997: 452), but Kubrick declined, revisiting the possibility of making *Napoleon*, a project on the life of the French Emperor that had long obsessed him (Parkinson 2004). But lack of financial support for the project saw Kubrick instead turn to an adaptation of an obscure William Makepeace Thackeray novel, *Barry Lyndon* (1844). The production of *Barry Lyndon* was shrouded in secrecy, with even Warner Bros. executives being kept in the dark (LoBrutto 1997: 385). Kubrick seemed to have the unequivocal trust of Warner Bros. who only saw the final film several weeks before it was distributed and, apparently, ‘no publicity was released by the studio without his [Kubrick’s] explicit permission’ (405). The film was the first to be executive produced by Jan Harlan, with Kubrick as producer, and Bernard Williams credited as associate producer. Its release came several months after *Jaws*

(1975) and, as Maria Pramaggiore has noted, seemed out of time with box office trends, leading to a somewhat mediocre reception (2015: 15-17).

The majority of Kubrick's time between his productions from the 1960s onwards was spent 'researching, reading, screening material, and pulling out all stops to find the initial point that would culminate in his next project' (LoBrutto 1997: 456). To that end, Kubrick incorporated Empyrean Films, a reading company that hired a team of readers to write reports on novels and was Kubrick's means of finding new projects. But despite the setting up of Empyrean, Kubrick selected a bestselling Stephen King horror novel to adapt for his next feature, *The Shining*. Again, just like *Barry Lyndon*, the film received a mixed reception, but fared much better at the box office. In subsequent years the film has garnered cult status and is now 'celebrated, not only as one of the greatest horror movies ever made, but a contemporary classic in its own right' (Mee 2017: 81). Kubrick may not have chosen a Stephen King novel in the hope of wider commercial appeal; the book, after all, had not been released when Kubrick decided to adapt it. Instead, he had been given a galley to read by Warner Bros.'s John Calley (Ulivieri 2017). But it was certainly marketed as a horror blockbuster, with a 'saturation advertising campaign' (Luckhurst 2013: 7). Yet it did not turn out to be quite the blockbuster success Warner Bros. was hoping for, taking over a year 'to break even on its \$18m production budget plus the costly advertising campaign' (Mee 2017: 84).

There was a seven-year hiatus between *The Shining* and Kubrick's next feature, *Full Metal Jacket* (1987), once more returning to the war genre. The gestation for *Full Metal Jacket* began in the spring of 1980 when Kubrick first approached Michael Herr (who would be given a credit of associate producer alongside screenwriter), but it wasn't until 1985 that Herr was formally invited to write the screenplay, after Kubrick had written a treatment of Gustav Hasford's novel, *The Short-Timers* (1979) (Phillips and Hill 2002: 156-157). Compared to *The Shining*, *Full Metal Jacket* was a phenomenal success. The film 'cost \$17million and grossed \$38million in the first fifty days of release' (LoBrutto 1997: 489). This was despite the fact that the film was markedly different in tone and narrative from other Vietnam War films, reflecting Kubrick's ability to balance art and commerce. As Pratap Rughani points out, Kubrick's ambition was 'to make mainstream audiences question and even contest the very

process of story-telling from what generals and film directors like to call the “theatre of war”” (2015: 310).

The time between *Full Metal Jacket* and Kubrick’s last film, *Eyes Wide Shut*, was the longest of all in his career at twelve years. During that time a number of projects were announced, but never realised, including *A.I.* (later directed by Steven Spielberg as *A.I. Artificial Intelligence* (2001)) and *Aryan Papers*. *Eyes Wide Shut* was the longest shoot not only of Kubrick’s career, but also in cinematic history, lasting from November 1996 and ending in February 1998 (Webster 2011: 141). Kubrick died before the film was released, with Jan Harlan, Leon Vitalli, and Anthony Frewin among those handed control of the project by Warner Bros. to see it through to completion and to oversee the necessary changes to ensure the film received an R-rating in the USA (Harlan 2005: 513). The film featured Tom Cruise and Nicole Kidman in the lead roles as a married couple, reflecting their real-life status. This generated enormous media interest in the project, particularly given its marketing campaign that ‘emphasised the film’s explicit representation of sex’ (Scholes and Martin 2015: 344). This was in contrast to the film’s slow and methodical pacing, leading it to become one of Kubrick’s most misunderstood films at the time. Its stature has grown, however, particularly among academics, with the film acting as a summation of Kubrick’s entire career. Case in point, the film was included as one of the twentieth century’s fifty canonical works of cinema, alongside films such as *Metropolis* (1927), *The Seven Samurai* (1954), *Psycho* (1960), and *Chungking Express* (1994), in Graham Roberts and Heather Wallis’s *Key Film Texts* (2002: 246-250).

This brief career overview provides the biographical context to this thesis and outlines Kubrick’s key achievements. Following his death in 1999, and with the opening of the Stanley Kubrick Archive in 2007, the standing of Kubrick within academic discourse and film history has only grown, to see him valorised alongside other key filmmaking figures such as Orson Welles and Alfred Hitchcock. Indeed, his reputation and the fandom this generates has led to a number of exhibitions, including the official travelling exhibition, becoming significant successes (Fenwick 2017b), while DVD re-releases continue apace (Jeffries 2017). The fact that such acclaim and status rests on only thirteen feature films is perhaps proof of the continuing strength of

the Kubrick 'brand' he had established during his nearly half a century as an independent producer.

## **Literature Review**

There has been ample academic study of Stanley Kubrick but, as the following review of Kubrick Studies literature will show, this has largely been within the contexts of textual interpretation of the formal elements of his films, or from a range of purely theoretical fields such as philosophy and psychoanalysis. This culminated with a tranche of edited collections immediately after his death that brought together these diverse interpretative theories, including Stuart McDougal's *A Clockwork Orange* (2003), Robert Kolker's *Stanley Kubrick's 2001: A Space Odyssey* (2006), Geoffrey Cocks, James Diedrick, and Glenn Perusek's *Depth of Field: Stanley Kubrick, Film, and the Uses of History* (2006), Jerold J. Abrams's *The Philosophy of Stanley Kubrick* (2007), and Gary D. Rhodes' *Stanley Kubrick: Essays on His Films and Legacy* (2008). These collections demonstrate the ways in which such strictly formalist approaches are detrimental to a fuller understanding of the cultural and industrial contexts of Kubrick's productions, as well as their collaborative nature. Abrams' introduction to his collection perhaps indicates the limited scope such perspectives take, saying that Kubrick's filmography 'takes all the differentiated sides of reality and unifies them into one rich, complex philosophical vision' (2007: 1), while Rhodes suggests that his collection offers an analysis of the narratives, genres and themes of Kubrick's films (2008: 2). But both these works neglect to situate or understand Kubrick's work within the wider industrial, economic, and societal contexts of the American film industry in which he operated. This critical review of Kubrick historiography reveals the gaps that this thesis will address in regards to the role of the producer on Kubrick's films. This will be followed by a review of the burgeoning field of Producer Studies in order to understand the key research questions that have emerged in recent years and the ways in which Kubrick as producer can be studied.

## ***Kubrick Studies***

Academia has come to regard Kubrick as the ultimate auteur given the apparent absolute control he had over his films and that this allowed him to remain an

independent within the mainstream across five decades. Studies have largely remained focused on Kubrick as a director, analysing the artistry of his films and trying to decode their meaning. Such orthodoxy in part can be seen to stem from the rise of the auteur theory in Film Studies in the 1960s, and from Alexander Walker's *Kubrick Directs* (1972), the first attempt to comprehensively analyse Kubrick's *oeuvre* and identify thematic trends. This may have been a reaction to Andrew Sarris's dismissal of Kubrick in his auteurist catalogue of great directors, *The American Cinema* (1968), in which he described Kubrick as being unable 'to tell a story on the screen with coherence and a consistent point of view' (1968: 196).

But Walker's book set the trend for the first wave of auteurist critique of Kubrick, followed by the likes of Joseph Gelmis's *The Film Director As Superstar* (1970), James Monaco's 'The Films of Stanley Kubrick' (1973), Norman Kagan's *The Cinema of Stanley Kubrick* (1972), and Gene Phillips's 'Stanley Kubrick' (1973) and *Stanley Kubrick: A Film Odyssey* (1975), all of which elevated Kubrick to the pedestal of cult-auteur that has survived ever since. Kubrick himself was not averse to the use of auteurism and of his name as a means of marketing; ever the brand-manager, he ensured he took credit even when it was not deserved. This is best emphasised during his time on *Spartacus*. The blacklisted Dalton Trumbo had written the screenplay and Kirk Douglas was under pressure not to give Trumbo the writing credit. Step forward Kubrick, who said he would take the credit on Trumbo's behalf, much to Douglas's shocked disapproval (Douglas 1988: 323).<sup>2</sup>

Brand-management certainly contributed to this first wave of auteurist criticism of Kubrick, a result of the publicity strategy of *2001: A Space Odyssey*. While filming was taking place, the vice-president of Kubrick's Polaris Productions, Roger Caras, devised a marketing strategy, along with Hawk Films publicist Mort Segal and MGM publicist Tom Buck. Buck wrote to Segal in January 1967 to argue that, 'the editorial focal point of this strategy must be Kubrick and his involvement in "2001-A Space Odyssey". Everything else is subservient' (Buck 1967). Such a strategy inevitably encouraged a series of books about *2001* that put Kubrick at the heart of its creation, including Jerome Agel's *The Making of "2001"* (1970) and Carolyn Geduld's *Filmguide to "2001: A*

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<sup>2</sup> Douglas eventually gave Dalton Trumbo the writing credit he deserved, contributing to the ending of the McCarthyist blacklist (Phillips and Hill 2002: 374-375).

*Space Odyssey* (1973). Critics and academics sought to understand the formal qualities of *2001*, including Hoch's 'Mythic Patterns in *2001: A Space Odyssey*' (1971) and Chin's analysis of plot interest in '2001: A Space Odyssey' (1974). These works all claimed to be offering new perspectives (an ever present phrase within Kubrick Studies), seeing turns toward psychoanalysis (Feldman's 'Kubrick and His Discontents' (1976) for example), or semiotics and questioning the language of film, again with a focus on *2001* due to its notable absence of significant dialogue and its breaking of the narrative conventions of the classical Hollywood. The latter became a fixture of French academic study of Kubrick and continues to hold sway there, influenced in large by the works of philosophers such as Giles Deleuze (1985) and Gilbert Simondon (1964), and impacting more recent critics such as *Cahiers du Cinéma*'s Bill Krohn (2010), and academics like Antoine Prevôt-Balga (2017) and Vincent Jaunas (2017). The literature generated on *2001* continues to multiply, with 'numerous articles appear[ing] to explain the various psychological, sociological, theological, historical and philosophical meanings' of the film (Coyle 1980: 27).

But Kubrick was, by the mid-1970s, seen as something of a misanthrope, his films offering a 'bleak view of man' and 'his simplistic view of life, his boring mannerisms' being a key quality highlighted in critiques and reviews (Feldman 1976: 12). Scholarly work had grown stale, though *Barry Lyndon* did attract several insightful articles, particularly Nelson's 'Barry Lyndon: Kubrick's Cinema of Disparity' (1978). In part, this wane of academic attention could be blamed on Kubrick's lengthening gaps between each film, as well as a deepening academic mistrust of the auteur theory (or ideology), of which Kubrick was seen very much as the personification. A renewed interest occurred in the early 1980s with the release of Kubrick's blockbuster horror *The Shining* and spurred on by Robert Kolker's seminal chapter 'Tectonics of the Mechanical Man' in his *A Cinema of Loneliness* (2011). The chapter offered an existential analysis of the spatial composition of Kubrick's films and incorporated together the various film theories that had to date tackled Kubrick's *oeuvre*. Kolker has remained a fervent cheerleader of this traditional avenue of research into Kubrick and places him within a modernist canon of film aesthetic, along with the likes of Orson Welles and Alfred Hitchcock (Kolker 2017a). Invariably describing his style as inimitable, Kolker contests that Kubrick's films 'constitutes the modernist strain in

contemporary American film' (107), an idea echoed by James Naremore who described him as 'the last and the most successful of the modernist directors who worked for the Hollywood studios' (2007: 3). Naremore and Kolker are concerned with the aesthetic construct of Kubrick's films and the intellectual motivations behind their composition. Naremore locates this modernist aesthetic in the idea of the grotesque and the absurdist and blackly humorist work of New York intellectuals in the 1940s and 1950s, and stresses Kubrick's association in the 1940s with 'two specialists in the grotesque': Weegee and Diane Arbus (2006: 7). Both Naremore and Kolker describes this modernism as manifesting itself in the spectacle of Kubrick's films, what he calls the 'extraordinary image, because in their images and the stories those images tell is an extraordinary array of cinematic ideas and ruminations about how we are in the world' (Kolker 2017a: 213). Kubrick entered into feature filmmaking on the back of these artistic trends in a New York intellectual atmosphere ruled by the beatniks, the end of ideology, and existentialism (Naremore 2013: 6).

Still academics and critics were intent on referring to *2001*, judging the quality of Kubrick's subsequent films against this, while at the same time becoming focused on the 'sterility' of his work (Jameson 1981: 125). There was little movement toward any greater contextual understanding of Kubrick's films, despite such discourses emerging in Film Studies and the emergence of the New Film History in the 1980s and 1990s. This lack of contextual understanding – economic, industrial and social, among other things – was picked up by Robert Sklar (1988). In his brief, yet insightful overview of Kubrick's relationship to the American film industry, Sklar notes how 'the relation between Stanley Kubrick and the American motion picture industry has received perhaps less attention than any other aspect of the filmmaker's career' (114). Sklar began the process of aligning Kubrick's work into production contexts, such as the industrial and economic history of United Artists, a company that the Harris-Kubrick Pictures Corporation was associated with in the mid-to-late 1950s. Sklar stressed the need for further research when saying that, 'Kubrick's films have played a much more central role than has heretofore been recognised in the transformation of film industry practices in the era since the breakup of studio monopolies and the rise of television' (115). He argued that Kubrick's filmmaking strategies had been unavoidably impacted by the conditions of the American film industry and its practices. As a result, Kubrick



the producer perhaps developed his own business and production models in order to subvert Hollywood and the major distributors (115).

Other academics in this period were tackling production and industrial contexts, such as the changing modes of production within Hollywood, best exemplified in *The Classical Hollywood Cinema: Film Style and Mode of Production to 1960* (Bordwell, Staiger and Thompson 1985: 331-332), a work that explored Hollywood's industrial shift towards independent production in the 1950s. Kubrick was very much a part of this industrial change, emerging as he did during the early 1950s. The discourse that *The Classical Hollywood Cinema* set in motion was only picked up in Kubrick Studies by Sklar and his assertion of Kubrick's centrality to the changing industrial practices of Hollywood (1988: 115). Peter Krämer would begin moves towards understanding this centrality with his 'The Limits of Autonomy: Stanley Kubrick, Hollywood and Independent Filmmaking, 1950-53' (2013a). Krämer provides an overview of the mode of production during the period 1950-53, during which time Kubrick made his short films and first feature, *Fear and Desire*. Krämer builds on Mather's (2013) work on modes of production at *Look* magazine, and suggests that the mode of production at *Look* may be applied to Kubrick's short films. He examines how he collaborated with producers for his short films, 'whereby he was either given a topic or pitched an idea' and his pre-production work would then be 'supervised by a producer' who would have responsibility for the assembly of Kubrick's submitted footage (2013a: 157). This mode of production is likened to the producer-unit-system, characteristic of the Hollywood in the 1930s and 1940s (Bordwell, Thompson and Staiger 1985: 157), with Krämer situating Kubrick's early career into the contextual discourse of *The Classical Hollywood Cinema* (1985). Krämer would make further inroads into such discourse with his 'Stanley Kubrick and the Internationalisation of Post-War Hollywood' (2017a); Kubrick's increasingly internationalised mode of production as well as thematic and narrative content were part of a trend in both Hollywood and wider American society (262-263). But Sklar's seminal article is an argument for further research on the films of Kubrick within the historical-industrial discourse laid out by *The Classical Hollywood Cinema* and the methodological framework of the New Film History, posing questions that can lead to further understanding of not just Kubrick, but of the American and British film industries as a whole. However, such challenges were not taken up by

academia, with Sklar's article bypassed in favour of the more traditional interpretive models.

Kubrick Studies in the 1990s saw an upsurge in the literary dissection of his films from the field of Adaptation Studies, exemplified by two key texts: Richard Corliss's *Lolita* (1994) and Greg Jenkins's *Stanley Kubrick and the Art of Adaptation: Three Novels, Three Films* (1997). The former looks towards the contexts of Nabokov's novel and his involvement in the adaptation, with an emphasis on the Russian author throughout, while the latter was a strictly comparative analysis of source novel and its adaptation. In fact, in the 2000s Adaptation Studies, which had significantly revived as a field of study (see Leitch (2007, 2008) and Stam (2005)), would become a dominant method of studying Kubrick, the majority of whose films were adaptations, resulting in the publication of a 'large number of journal articles, ranging from essays focused on individual elements of adaptation, such as McQueen's exploration of the language in *A Clockwork Orange*, to collections such as the special Kubrick Issue of *Literature/Film Quarterly* (2001)' (Fenwick 2015a: 1). More recently, I.Q. Hunter guest edited a special issue of *Adaptation*, 'Kubrick and Adaptation' (2015), and Elisa Pezzotta approached Kubrick's aesthetics via adaptation in her *Stanley Kubrick: Adapting the Sublime* (2013).

Following Kubrick's death in 1999, there was an attempt to fully categorise and understand his *oeuvre* through his 'thematic and stylistic consistencies' (Pezzotta 2013: 11). Seeing him as the ultimate auteur, these academics stressed the importance of film as a medium to Kubrick and tried to define the idea of the Kubrickian cinema. Thomas Nelson's *Kubrick: Inside a Film Artist's Maze* (2000), a work which criticised the stale orthodoxy of auteur criticism around Kubrick's films and instead gave a comprehensive reconsideration to Kubrick through film aesthetics and genre, argued that Kubrick shouldn't simply be categorised by default as a European auteur (5), but as an artist whose vision stemmed from the ideological techniques of V.E. Pudovkin (1929), with a meticulously organised temporal rhetoric designed to guide audiences towards themes (Nelson 2000: 5-7). Nelson designated this unity as Kubrick's 'aesthetics of contingency'. But the works of James Naremore (2007) and others including Luis M. Garcia Mainar (2000), Mario Falsetto (2001), Randy Rasmussen (2005), and Robert Kolker (2011), often originally published in the 1970s, but revised and expanded for

publication after Kubrick's death, all hark back to the ideological formalism of Film Studies in the 1970s, with analyses such as psychoanalysis, semiotics and film language, and narrative and textual analysis of Kubrick's *oeuvre*. Such literature on Kubrick, developed since the release of *2001: A Space Odyssey*, can be divided into two trends, the first being a 'formalist approach based on the analysis of style and narrative patterning', while the second 'draws on interpretative cues present in the films' leading to postmodernist understandings of Kubrick (Sperb 2006: 33-34).

A third category should also be proposed, which takes an interdisciplinary approach and draws on issues of Film History and film *as* history, towards an historiographical understanding of Kubrick's *oeuvre*, weighted firmly in the modernism of the twentieth century. This approach was brought to the fore at a symposium on the director in 2000 at Albion College's Centre for Interdisciplinary Study in History and Culture. The symposium, titled *The Eyes Have It: Stanley Kubrick, Film, and the Uses of History*, resulted in the edited volume *Depth of Field: Stanley Kubrick, Film, and the Uses of History* (Cocks, Diedrick, and Perusek 2006), a work that according to the editors 'emphasizes the historical contexts, and historiographical implications, of Kubrick's career and oeuvre' (8). Kubrick's vision was steeped in the history of the twentieth century, with ten of his thirteen films situated within that century and confronting 'the unprecedented organization of power and violence among people and states that dominated much of the first half of the century' (8). Cocks, one of the editors of the collection, has been the key proponent of the use of history within Kubrick's films, from his essay 'Bringing the Holocaust Home: The Freudian Dynamics of Kubrick's *The Shining*' (1991), to his book *The Wolf at the Door: Stanley Kubrick, History and the Holocaust* (2007), which argued that the Holocaust was allegorised across Kubrick's films, particularly in *The Shining*, and was a continuous source of influence on his cinematic vision. Such ideas are summarised in the introduction to *Depth of Field*, which states that Kubrick's films 'can be seen as bringing the terrible news of twentieth century history – and the humbling message of twentieth century social and psychological theory – to a mass audience in the form of the characteristically twentieth century medium of film' (Cocks, Diedrick, and Perusek 2006: 5). The literature adapted by Kubrick was often (but not always) obscure, allowing the audience to be free of established interpretations of the source text's

‘meanings’ (7). This allowed Kubrick to ‘engage various philosophical, social, and historical concerns free from the constraints not only of expectation but literary and film genre. Such license reinforces the importance of a formal Film Studies component to the literature on Kubrick’ (7).

The arguments laid out by Cocks take into consideration psychosocial histories of Kubrick and his ancestral origins in Eastern Europe, along with his Jewish background and his marriage to Christiane Kubrick, whose uncle, Veit Harlan, worked as a film maker for Joseph Goebbels and directed some of the most notorious Nazi propaganda films, including *Jew Süss* (1940) (Cocks 2007: 70-71). Psychosocial histories of Kubrick have been pursued by other academics, vehemently so in the case of Nathan Abrams in works such as ‘An Alternative New York Jewish Intellectual: Stanley Kubrick’s Cultural Critique’ (2015a), in which Abrams states that very few academic studies ‘consider Kubrick’s origins and ethnicity and how these impacted on his work’ (64). Abrams situates Kubrick within a ‘Jewish New York intellectual milieu to show how it influenced his outlook’ (64), suggesting that ‘Kubrick’s films engage with Jewish texts [...] his films were clearly engaged in the search for meaning, much of which can be ascribed to a Jewish upbringing’ (2011). Such psychosocial histories have seen Abrams position his analysis of Kubrick within wholly new perspectives, such as a reading of *2001: A Space Odyssey*’s HAL 9000 supercomputer as a subliminal reference to the company IBM and to that company’s complicity with the Holocaust (2017). Abrams argues that his research demonstrates Kubrick’s ‘exploration of his signature concerns: the Holocaust and Jewishness’ (430). Abrams is not alone in this approach, which blends developmental psychology with empirical research. Philippe Mather has been highly influential in this regard, conducting numerous studies into Kubrick’s early career as a photographer at *Look* magazine and arguing that ‘a young person’s formative years usually have a lasting impact on his or her professional development’ (15). This leads Mather to consider the influence of Kubrick’s photography on his later cinematic aesthetic. These psychosocial histories of Kubrick are arguably an extension of the formalist analysis carried out by the likes of Nelson (2000), Garcia Mainar (2000), and Falsetto (2001) in an attempt to define the Kubrickian aesthetic.

It is at this point in the literature on Kubrick that we begin to arrive at the gaps that this research aims to address, gaps first identified by Sklar (1988) almost three

decades ago and which have still largely been neglected. The most recent wave of Kubrick Studies, which Kolker has described as a ‘spectacular turn’ (2017b) (what should more accurately be labelled an empirical turn), utilises the methodological framework of the New Film History by scouring the Stanley Kubrick Archive to uncover new perspectives. Peter Krämer has been at the vanguard of this new Kubrick Studies, with insightful analyses of *Dr. Strangelove* (2014a), *2001: A Space Odyssey* (2010), and *A Clockwork Orange* (2011b), alongside reception studies of the latter two films (2009; 2011a). Krämer has begun the process of emphasising collaboration on a Stanley Kubrick film, arguing that ‘Kubrick is probably best understood not as a dictatorial genius but through his interactions with collaborators’ (Krämer 2015a: 61). Other avowed auteurists have often hinted at the fact that Kubrick was first and foremost a collaborator, including Michel Chion, a dedicated auteur ideologue himself, who said that ‘what ended up as *2001* is not necessarily a film over which Kubrick had complete control’ (2001: 41-42) and that Kubrick ‘like others, was operating in the real world, and like others he worked with collaborators’ (41). As the Archive celebrates its tenth anniversary, it becomes clear that from the body of work that has so far emerged, there is much about Kubrick and the way in which he made his films that is unknown. The challenge now is to utilise this archival material, as well as the empirical turn within Kubrick Studies, to illuminate the interpretive ideas of old and to fully understand Kubrick as a truly visionary filmmaker operating within the mainstream of Hollywood. Krämer’s work and his statements on the collaborative nature of a Kubrick production emphasise the need for a redressing of our understanding of Kubrick the director, which in the case of this thesis will be through his role as a producer. To begin this process, we need to first establish what the discourse on the role of the producer is and what the key research questions are in relation to the role.

### ***Producer Studies***

The rise of Film Studies coincided with the proliferation of the director-as-auteur and led to a stranglehold within academia that has endured, meaning little attention has been given to the role of the producer (Spicer 2006: 1). But academic studies on the producer have burgeoned in recent years. A key instigator of this has been Andrew Spicer, whose work focuses on the role of the producer in the British film industry, but his theories

and methodologies can be applied more widely. Utilising the methodologies of the New Film History, Spicer has begun to reposition the importance of the producer within Film History. He has written extensively on the subject, from detailed historical case studies of individual producers, such as *Sydney Box* (2006) and *The Man Who Got Carter: Michael Klinger, Independent Production and the British Film Industry 1960-1980* (Spicer and McKenna 2013), to an edited volume that draws together new perspectives from across Film Studies, *Beyond the Bottom Line: The Producer in Film and Television Studies* (Spicer, McKenna, and Meir 2013). Spicer's focus on the producer repeatedly emphasises the role's neglected nature within academia. In fact, it is that specific verb, neglect, which leads to the most pertinent research questions within Producer Studies. Why is it that the role has been neglected? To what extent has it been neglected? How has the role been written about previously? And what is the academic response to such neglect? Scholarly neglect can be divided into two core reasons. Firstly the negative representation of the producer within film and media, specifically by Hollywood, and secondly the ambiguous definition of the role itself (33).

A limited discourse does exist prior to Spicer's work, though primarily in relation to the studio-era producers such as David O. Selznick, with an inadequate amount on producers who transitioned from the Hollywood studio-era into the Hollywood Renaissance/New Hollywood. Such works include Matthew Bernstein's insightful study into producer Walter Wanger (*Walter Wanger: Hollywood Independent*, 1994), while Thomas Schatz's *The Genius of the System* (1988) offers perceptions of the semi-independent productions of producers in the 1930s and 1940s, and Tino Balio's *United Artists: The Company That Changed the Film Industry* (1987) contains brief case-studies of key independent producers such as Stanley Kramer, Kirk Douglas, and Buster Keaton. Schatz has stressed that the producer is 'the most misunderstood and undervalued figure in American film history' (1988: 6), with Bernstein arguing that this lack of understanding stems from the late 1970s during which 'victimized writers and directors' castigated the producer as 'an uncultured philistine' (1994: xiv). The issue of neglect and misinterpretation are prevalent when one looks at the above survey of literature within Kubrick Studies, it being obvious that auteurism has valued the role of the film director over that of producer and led to a discourse around artistry that omits reference to wider industrial contexts.

The discourse in Producer Studies has been toward these very concerns, coalescing around the need to establish a way forward: how should one methodologically approach the study of the producer and what should be the broader contexts? A special issue of the *Journal of British Cinema and Television* (2012) brought together current thought and raised questions of creative agency and the form this takes with a producer – pertinent when put into the context of Bernstein's (2008) reclamation of the producer as auteur, though with reference to the studio era. Throughout the special issue of the *Journal of British Cinema and Television*, time and again we are reminded of the stereotype of 'producers as the enemies of directorial creativity' (Hoyle 2012: 79). What is called for is not so much an abandonment of the auteur theory but a revision toward the collaborative process and collective authorship. If we are to begin to understand Film History from the displaced perspective of the producer, then the key to this analysis is their role within the entirety of the film production process (Spicer 2010).

Six key research questions have arisen to date in Producer Studies: authorship, career assessment, unmade/unfinished films, producers' role, trans-nationality, and methodological approaches. Using a case-study of British producer Sydney Box, Andrew Spicer suggests that the study of the producer and their working practices should be situated historically due to the constant flux of the film industry (both British and American), with the role of the producer changing and morphing in 'relation to these external economic forces' (2004b: 34). Such 'chronic instability' means that the producer should be considered a central role within the film industry (35). The misinterpretation of the producer within Film Studies is detrimental to our view of Film History, since film is necessarily an industry based on profit and thereby needs producers to ensure viable, commercial product. But Spicer's article raised the most pertinent research question of all, which has continued to be debated since: what should our methodological approach be in the study of the producer?

The predominant method of analysis in Producer Studies has been to eschew filmic texts in favour of unpublished sources. This is mainly as a result of the ephemeral nature of the producer's role and the invisibility of their contribution to the film text. In contrast, empirical research finds that archives offer ample evidence of the producer's role. Brian Hoyle (2012), for instance, examines producer Don Boyd's work on the

anthology film *Aria* (1987) via an historical account of the production of the film. This is in order to reveal the working methods of Boyd, avoiding detailed textual analysis of the film itself and preferring to illuminate our understanding of it through Boyd's actions as a producer. This method inevitably includes an element of career assessment and biography in order to provide context, usually along the lines of the circumstances that led to their becoming a producer (Hoyle 2012: 77). Hoyle details the constraints faced by Boyd and his financial backers in trying to realize *Aria*, utilising archival material from the Don Boyd Papers, mainly a combination of correspondence and budget reports. As Anthony McKenna has pointed out, 'the producer is best found in the archive' (2012a: 111).

But there are also limitations to the use of archival sources, primarily the omission of material. This may be due to removal of certain documents by the owners of the archive for legal reasons, as is the case with the Stanley Kubrick Archive, Warner Bros. having had lawyers remove any material they do not wish to be publicly available. It may also be a result of the at times seemingly trivial documents contained within the archive. In his exploration of the Michael Klinger Papers, McKenna sums up the film researcher's frustrations with the archive: 'What we get are credit card receipts and lots of them, maybe some taxi receipts, and letters saying 'Where's my cheque?' with responses saying 'I sent it yesterday'' (2012a: 112). Such material can be used to construct a picture of how a producer operated, what their working practices were, what their future ambitions and strategies were, and ultimately their strengths and weaknesses as a business person. It can also reveal what Christopher Meir calls a producer's 'production networks' (2012: 60), their contacts within studios and other companies and how they influenced them (or were influenced by them). For McKenna, such material reveals that Michael Klinger, for instance, kept a close-eye at all times on his budgets (2012a: 113). Similarly, James Chapman's study of producer Harry Saltzman uses the Film Finances Archives, which reveal Saltzman to be a 'very poor hands-on producer who too often lost control of the film-making process' (2014: 66).

In part, the 'archival turn in film history with its emphasis on documentary evidence' (Chapman 2014: 65) has contributed to the academic interest in the role of the producer. Spicer has been at the forefront of calls for such methodological tools in the study of the producer and demonstrates such methods in his own accounts of the careers



of Michael Klinger (2013) and Sydney Box (2006), using archival material to tell their untold stories, often with an eye towards films that were never made. Unmade films have proven to be a favourable method of research in Producer Studies. The hidden histories unmade films provide are compelling in what they can reveal of the role of the producer and the constraints of production, as is the case in the history of Klinger's unmade *Green Beach* (Spicer 2010). Spicer's work examines the 'complexities of filmmaking and the continual struggle to balance the competing demands of creativity and commerce' through the role of the producer (2010: 298). His attempts to construct the history of *Green Beach* is an excellent means of addressing issues of industrial, political and cultural constraint and in providing fuller accounts of national film industries. This is exemplified in Spicer's recounting of the unmade films of British producer Sydney Box, in which through a case study of four unmade films, he illuminates 'the broader constraints and pressures under which producers' work (2008: 87). Spicer's study highlights how financial backing and distribution deals have always been at the centre of the constraints faced by producers, and so it was with Box, his attempt to make *Up at the Villa* turned down by investors due to a lack of a guaranteed circuit release (98). Analysis of the reasons behind failed and unfinished films can 'expose the mechanics of the film industry in a way that similar analysis of canonical or overlooked works cannot' (McKenna 2012b: 230). Analysis of a film's failure can also address the reasons for the success of others (244) and, more importantly, it can begin to assess why an apparently all-powerful producer such as Stanley Kubrick had difficulty in bringing to fruition a number of feature films. This, though, raises the more complex question of the role and function of the producer.

Attempts to define the role of the producer are often explored through career assessments and biographical overviews. There are advantages to such summative essays. Take Larry Ceplair's (2009) study of producer Julian Blaustein, an example of a neglected producer whose career assessment reveals insights into the social and political contexts of Hollywood, in this case the ideological constraints created by the House Committee on Un-American Activities and its witch-hunt for communist infiltrators in Hollywood from 1947 through to the mid-1960s. Other such profiles, like Bernard Ince's (2007) biographical assessment of silent-era producer Percy Nash, or Bernstein's (1994) career overview of studio-era producer Walter Wenger, aim to restore forgotten

and often prolific industry figures, motivated primarily because they are individuals ‘warranting attention’ (Ince 2007:1). Michael De Angelis’ (2003) study of ‘megaproducer’ Robert Stigwood takes such an approach, aiming to understand how Stigwood defined his authorial agency through an assessment of his career. De Angelis suggests that issues of brand-management and star discourse effected the perception of Stigwood as producer and businessman. Stigwood, who produced films including *Tommy* (1975) and *Saturday Night Fever* (1977), is positioned as displaying finesse in his business dealings, and that rather than possessing a distinct signatorial aesthetic that would place him as an auteur, De Angelis instead locates a ‘success’ signature (2003: 252). Whereas other filmmakers in the early 1970s were demonstrating their aesthetic prowess, Stigwood instead was able to gauge public opinion and thus produce successful films that may not have contained a unifying aesthetic theme (252-253). Instead, the films produced by Stigwood in the mid-1970s had their success ‘intricately interwoven with the management of the “visibility” of directors and performers’ (253). Stigwood as producer would act as an enabler of the creative conditions and collaboration on his productions, but distanced himself from aesthetic accountability, preferring his image to be associated with commercial viability and profits instead (256).

Spicer, McKenna and Meir (2014: 9-11) highlight the ways in which the producers themselves utilise ‘self-promotion and showmanship’, perhaps best exemplified by notorious characters such as Robert Evans in the 1960s and 1970s, and Harvey Weinstein in the 1980s and 1990s. The idea of the producer as networker is an image sustained through filmic and televisual representations – the producer on the phone, schmoozing business partners at expensive restaurants etc – but networking is a necessity of the role and the industry. This is perhaps one of the reasons why the role of the producer can at times be hard to quantify due to the transient nature of networking, with oral contracts and negotiations being made over drinks or on the phone. Kubrick especially favoured this method and, as Robert Kolker indicates, ‘These, of course, were not recorded and therefore are not archived, meaning that a large part of the creative process is still left unknown’ (2017b).

What the literature on the producer makes clear is that there is no one definite answer to what a producer is or does. Each producer is different, operating distinct

managerial models across time, with some at a remove from the actual production, while others are intimately involved, even directing their own productions. With each film, producers may take on new responsibilities or delegate them to associate or line producers. The ephemeral nature of the role has led to this ‘privileging of the director’s role’ in Film Studies (Spicer, McKenna and Meir 2014:8). This ambiguous nature, as McKenna (2012c) and Porter (2012) have argued, also stems also from changes to technology, finance and industrial structures. The producer’s ‘creative freedom (or lack thereof)’ and his exact function are dependent on numerous industrial factors (McKenna 2012c: 611).

Kubrick, by the very nature of Hollywood’s organisation, had to respond to the constraints of the film industry and its constant flux. These industrial contexts unavoidably impacted his productions and the way he operated as a producer. Therefore the role of the producer is the most suited approach to understanding these constraints and to provide a fuller account of Kubrick’s position within the industrial transformations of Hollywood.

### **Defining the Producer**

The role of the producer largely remains equivocal by nature, even in spite of the growing research in Producer Studies (as explored in the above Literature Review). The field seems no closer to ascertaining the exact functions of a producer and it’s quite possible that, because of how the role has changed over the decades, each study of a producer will lead to differing results as to how they should be defined. Jon Lewis’s recent edited collection, *Producing* (2016), attempts to provide a comprehensive history of the role, but even here it is a muddled account as to who or what a producer is, with the role transforming from era to era. As Lewis sums up in the introduction to the collection,

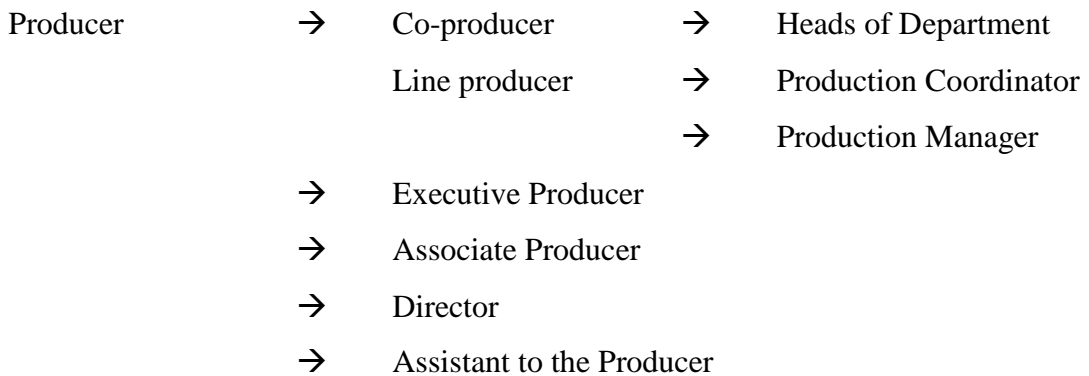
Of all the job titles listed in the opening and closing screen credits, “producer” is certainly the most amorphous. There are businessmen producers (and businesswomen producers), writer-director and movie-star producers; producers who work for the studio or work as a liaison between a production company and the studio; executive producers whose reputation and industry clout alone gets a project financed (though their day-to-day participation in the project may be negligible); and independent producers whose independence is at once a matter of industry structure (as the studios no longer produce much of anything anymore). (2016: 1)

What Lewis constructs here is an argument of how intrinsically the role of the producer, arguably more so than any other film role, is linked to the industrial conditions of Hollywood and is shaped by its changing economic structures. Therefore when we think of Kubrick's role as a producer it inevitably leads to a discussion of the industrial factors that shaped him and impacted on his work. This thesis will approach the defining of Kubrick as a producer through these changing industrial circumstances and how he used them to acquire ever more control over his own productions, the legal authority he talked of in 1972.

It is not the purpose of this thesis to provide an etymology of the role, with accounts of its origins provided by Mark Lynn Anderson (2016: 15-35) and Joanna Rapf (2016: 36-62) in Lewis's collection. In addition, Andrew Spicer, A.T. McKenna and Christopher Meir provide an overview of the role in the introduction to their edited collection *Beyond the Bottom Line: The Producer in Film and Television Studies* (2014: 1-13). Instead the thesis will consider how Kubrick transformed the role in order to achieve the legal authority he sought. In the process, this will lead to a greater understanding of Kubrick as a producer, comparing this to his fellow producers of the time.

It is useful at this point to turn to non-academic sources in order to gain a firmer definition of what a producer does, as set out by organisations such as the Producers' Guild of America (PGA) and the registered UK charity Creative Skillset. The PGA has developed a Code of Credits for Theatrical Motion Pictures in which they define a series of generalised criteria pertaining to the role of producer as well as other producing types. The definitions arrived at by the PGA are based on a survey of producers within the American film industry in order to 'offer a comprehensive definition of the unique and extensive responsibilities of a producer' (PGA 2015a: 3). But as the PGA makes clear, and as Producer Studies stresses, these responsibilities vary greatly from one producer to the next. I first want to briefly consider these definitions and arrive at a standard hierarchy of the various producing roles in the modern film industry.

[Executive Producer]



The above diagram outlines a generalised producing hierarchy on a modern American film production. The executive producer appears twice, firstly in brackets above the producer and secondly as an individual who is overseen by the producer. This highlights the contradictory and ambiguous nature of this producer type. A major financier or studio may have appointed the executive producer in brackets so as to keep a watchful eye over the proceedings and report back to them, thus ‘supervising the producer on their behalf’ (creativeskillset.org). In contrast, the executive producer who is overseen by the producer is someone who has provided a significant contribution in the production, or is affiliated in some contractual way to either the film or the literary property the film is based on, as was the case with the executive producers of *A Clockwork Orange*. Max L. Raab and Si Litvinoff received the credit and appeared on the film poster not because of any involvement in the actual production, but merely because they sold the rights to the book to Warner Bros. and received the credit as part of the deal (Appendix II). In the case of Jan Harlan, executive producer on all Kubrick production from 1975 to 1999, he had a much more active role, often seemingly filling the administrative functions normally performed by the producer.

The producer is at the head of the above hierarchy and is the individual that most concerns this thesis. According to the PGA, the producer has ‘final responsibility for all business and creative aspects of the production’, in addition to having ‘direct participation in making decisions concerning a major portion of the producing functions’ (PGA 2015b). This does not mean, however, that they have full legal

authority and may be answerable to executive producers, production executives at studios, or other financial backers. The extent of their power is determined through their employment contract. The PGA outlines the job functions over which the producer has decision-making authority. These are across the four key phases of film production: development, pre-production, production, and post-production/marketing. Functions within the development phase include the need to conceive the underlying concept of the production, to select the writer(s), to secure initial financing and to serve as the ‘primary point of contact for the studio and / or financing entity’ (2015b). The producer also should approve the final shooting schedule at this stage. At the production stage, the producer continues to supervise on a ‘day-to-day operation the producing team and the entire shooting company’ (2015b). They may delegate powers to the co-producer and the associate producer, individuals that have ‘primary responsibility for the logistics of the production’, with the Heads of Department reporting to them (PGA 2015b).<sup>3</sup> The producer also has to give approval to weekly cost reports. Finally, during post-production/marketing the producer is consulted ‘on the media plan and materials, and then marketing and distribution plans for the motion picture’ (2015b). But as this research will show, such decision-making authority has not always been invested in the producer, with Kubrick having to battle with studios and executives to gain these powers.

This brief consideration of the role of the producer outlines the general organisational structure of film production. It is by no means definitive and as this research will show, Kubrick himself differed greatly at times in his role as a producer from any such industry norm. The adopted research methodology of this thesis is what is key to understanding how Kubrick worked as a producer.

### **Approach and Methodology**

The thesis will use the methodological framework of the ‘New Film History’ and take a case study approach to Kubrick’s role as a producer and the production companies he incorporated between 1953 and 1999. The discourse for a New Film History first

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<sup>3</sup> Associate producers may have played a significant role in the development or writing of the screenplay (creativeskillset.org), which is why an individual like Michael Herr received the credit on *Full Metal Jacket*.

emerged in the mid-1970s. It was a response to the narrow ideological formalism that dominated Film Studies as well as the poor scholarly quality of the 'old' film history. The use of the term New Film History can be traced back as early as 1974 at the 'Symposium on the Methodology of Film History' in Montreal, organised as part of the 30<sup>th</sup> Annual Congress of the International Federation of Film Archives and with the papers published in a special issue of *Cinema Journal* (1975, Vol. 14, No. 2). The symposium aimed to explore the need for new methodologies in the study of film history, particularly with the rise of film archives and studios looking to deposit their archives with institutions. Thomas Cripps, present at the symposium, congratulated the work of the Wisconsin State Historical Society (holder of the United Artists Archive and Kirk Douglas Papers, among many other motion picture archival holdings) that had organised corporate and personal papers of studios and stars into a 'systematic usable form' (Cripps 1975: 45). But Cripps urged other institutions to do the same, because,

without them we can never expect institutional approaches to the history of Hollywood production. The theory of the *politique des auteurs* has its uses, but as more critics are becoming aware, the true *auteur* was the studio. Yet we need paper documents of in house correspondence in order to effectively write such future accounts. (45).

This group of film historians, who Charles Musser referred to as 'Young Turks' (1985: 49), saw the need for new empirical methodologies as the discipline of Film History developed. Cripps lamented that the history of film had been left in the hands of journalists who wrote historical accounts for commercial publication and 'without benefit of citation of corporate records or other manuscript sources' (Cripps 1975: 44). Thomas Elsaesser, in a review article for *Sight and Sound* in 1986, argued that the historical turn in film academia was a result of the increasing availability of archives and what he describes as a 'polemical dissatisfaction with the surveys and overviews' of what constituted film history up to that point' (Elsaesser 1986: 246). But Jay Leyda had explicitly called for a New Film History over a decade earlier at the 1974 Montreal symposium in order to 'deepen and broaden present critical work' by making use of 'unused archive materials' to create a new and fresh 'international film history' (1975: 40). Leyda called for a radical new film history that would correct the fundamental error of the discipline: its tendency to 'separate film from the rest of our world' (41).

This has been the key methodological concept of the New Film History, placing films and their production into a variety of wider contexts, including economic,

political, social and cultural, and drawing on primary sources to do so. Eileen Bowser summed up the key research questions facing the New Film History:

It can't be enough to examine a film by itself, or all the films of one director or even one country. Films must be seen in relation to each other. Nor can films be seen in isolation from their times, from all other cultural, social and political events and ideas. The problem is to find the techniques for gathering all this information and then how it shall be organized to reveal the history of cinema in a new perspective' (Bowser 1975: 2).

The isolation of film, confined within theoretical analysis that stemmed from English Literature and Communication Studies, resulted in a reflectionist interpretation, neglecting the wider 'cultural dynamics of film production' (Chapman, Glancy and Harper 2007: 6). But the historical turn also stemmed from the academic legitimisation of Film History as it broke from its origins within English Literature and Communication Studies by the 1970s, and gained legitimacy by aspiring 'towards scientific or empirical standards of exactitude and knowledge' (Elsaesser 1986: 247). New journals began to emerge that stressed this new historical and methodological approach, including *The Historical Journal of Film, Radio and Television (HJFRT)* and *Film History*. The latter journal explicitly laid out its aims to explore 'the historical development of the motion picture, and the social, technological, and economic context in which such development has occurred' (Koszarski 2012: 3). The journal's original calls for papers stressed how it could 'not accept papers which are essentially analytical or theoretical' (Anon. 1987: 43). Charles Musser in his 1985 review article of the edited collection *The American Movie Industry: The Business of Motion Pictures* (Kindem 1982) – which made use of New Film History methodologies – argued how 'extensive use of primary source research often seems more innovative than their perspective' with 'the practitioners of this new film history apparently consider[ing] movie watching to be an unnecessary luxury' (Musser 1985: 49). Primary sources are central to the New Film History, using 'evidence disregarded by traditional film histories: business papers, court records, city ordinances, urban transport policy and demographic data of all kinds' (Elsaesser 1986: 247). Rather than view the film as the only object of investigation, the New Film History looks to a wider range of sources, with film viewing for some being 'an inappropriate research method' (247). This approach is at the heart of what the New Film History is about, what Chapman, Glancy and Harper call 'methodological



sophistication’ over the narrow methods of Film Studies (2007: 6). The growth of the New Film History in the past decades has seen a sharpening of the ‘methods of empirical analysis’ (Hunter, Porter and Smith 2017: 1). What this has led to has been the use of archival and primary sources ‘to explore the socio-economic determinants and effects of film culture’ and has ‘shifted emphasis from textual analysis [...] to evidence-based accounts of the political economy of entertainment’ (1).

*The New Film History: Sources, Methods and Approaches* (Chapman, Glancy and Harper 2007) has been a key text in the ‘consolidation’ of this historical turn and new methodological framework (Hunter, Porter and Smith 2017: 1). It defines the New Film History by three characteristics: first is the contextualisation of film within historical processes, ‘including economic constraints, industrial practices, studio production strategies and relationships with external bodies such as official agencies, funding councils and censors’ (Chapman, Glancy and Harper 2007: 6); second is the centrality of primary sources; and third the understanding that films are cultural artefacts to which ‘the film historian can add a material dimension to the analysis by showing how struggles for creative control can be glimpsed in the visual texture of the film itself’ (8).

While drawing on the historiography of Kubrick Studies, the thesis will utilise the methodologies of the New Film History and Producer Studies. The prominence of Kubrick Studies and Producer Studies in this chapter is to stress the gap in our knowledge of Stanley Kubrick and how the former will be addressed via the use of the methodological frameworks and discourses of the latter. Situating this thesis within the empirical framework of New Film History and the turn toward a more nuanced textual-contextual relationship, we can begin to approach Stanley Kubrick from the holistic perspective of a producer. But this is not to suggest the survey of these two fields is an exhaustive critical analysis of all the research and theoretical discourses that will inform this thesis. Indeed, there are many other key texts and ideas that cannot be touched on, as to do so would leave little room in this thesis for anything else. Instead, there is a full account of all such additional literature in the bibliography.

The debates in Kubrick Studies have long been concerned with authorship and the Kubrickian aesthetic construct over that of the wider contexts favoured by the New Film History (Krämer 2007: 105). Still we must consider that, though the use of

archival material and empirical approaches is a key component to the New Film Historian and to this research, ‘the New Film History should be thought of as more than just a question of method’ (Ede 2007: 73), but how those methods are applied to understand the ‘material constraints of production’ (86). This has become a key debate in Kubrick Studies during the research for this thesis. I.Q. Hunter and I convened a major academic conference in 2016. Entitled *Stanley Kubrick: A Retrospective*, the conference brought together Kubrick scholars to consider the state of Kubrick Studies, the impact of the opening of the Stanley Kubrick Archive, and the methodologies that should be adopted moving forward. But what did result were two special journal issues that summarised the current research questions within the field. While the special Kubrick issue of *Cinergie* (November 2017) highlighted the continued output of the traditional methodologies in the study of Kubrick, with a heavy emphasis on textual analysis and little archival research, the special dossier of the *Historical Journal of Film, Radio and Television* argued that archival research and New Film History methodologies had become the leading mode of study in order to fully understand Kubrick’s position within film history.

This reflected a wider divide between Film Studies and Film History in which the two ‘tried to ignore each other’ and resulted in a caricature as described by Andrew Spicer:

Film Studies was judged by historians to be enmeshed in impenetrable, redundant and universalizing theory in which texts seemed to operate in a historical and social vacuum. Cinema History was regarded as the province of a naïve, untheorized, positivist empiricism that reduced all film texts to a simple set of messages that could be read out from their historical context. (2004a: 147)

But as the New Film History has now ‘come of age’ (Hunter, Porter and Smith 2017: 1) a fresh wave of film historians look to draw on its methodologies to complement more theoretical and interpretive approaches to film, as indicated in ‘The Stanley Kubrick Archive: A Dossier of New Research’ (Fenwick, Hunter and Pezzotta 2017: 368-369). The dossier outlines how a number of more traditionally reflective fields of study use archival sources to ‘complement their textual analysis’ (368). Similarly Andrew Spicer acknowledges how there is the beginning of a convergence between Film Studies and Film History, with works such as James Chapman’s *Saints and Avengers: British Adventure Series of the 1960s* (2002) and Sue Harper’s *Women in British Cinema: Mad,*

*Bad and Dangerous to Know* (2000) ‘attentive equally to historical, social and cultural contexts and to textual interpretation (including judgments about aesthetic quality), recognizing films (or television programmes) as complex and often contradictory texts’ (Spicer 2004a: 154). Spicer also notes how new works have a place for agency, ‘but that agency is seen as variable and historically conditioned, working within particular constraints that operate in different ways at different times’ (154).

There is still a need to ensure such a balance is achieved between these two research approaches in Kubrick Studies. Archival research should not be used to override more traditional research avenues, but instead used to enhance the understanding of Kubrick’s films and their content. Robert Kolker, firmly in the old tradition of Kubrick research, has recently taken to exploring the Kubrick Archive, but warned that an increasing number of Kubrick scholars ‘believe no serious work on Kubrick can be done without the appropriate archival research, that criticism and analysis must be tethered to the known facts that exist on the archived paper records’ (Kolker 2017b). This, he suggests, is a dangerous methodological route to take and should be balanced with a more nuanced interpretation of his films.

This thesis then draws on the empirical methodologies of the New Film History to both understand Kubrick’s methods as a producer and the impact this had on the aesthetic construct of his films. The thesis makes extensive use of archival material, primarily drawn from the Stanley Kubrick Archive, but other archives will also be used, including the National Archives, the British Library (which holds the Harold Pinter Papers), the University of Liverpool Archives (home of the Brian Aldiss Papers), the Wisconsin Historical Society (the location of both the Kirk Douglas Papers and the United Artists Archive), and the Margaret Herrick Library. In addition, research has been conducted into trade journal entries concerning Kubrick and the industrial conditions relating to him. This sees the research making use of journals such as *Variety*, *Boxoffice*, *The Independent Film Journal*, *Billboard*, *Broadcasting*, *The Monthly Film Bulletin*, as well as a number of newspaper archives, including those of the *New York Times*, *Los Angeles Times*, and *The Guardian*.

Contact has also been made with a number of Kubrick’s key colleagues, initiated through the established collaborative relationship of Jan Harlan. Jan has supported this research since 2015 and kindly agreed to be interviewed in January 2016. This has been

followed up by conversations via email, by chance encounter at the Stanley Kubrick Archive, and at conferences and events. James B. Harris, Kubrick's producing partner from the 1950s and 1960s, also consented to be interviewed in January 2016, which was followed up by email correspondence. Other individuals were approached, including the graphic illustrator Chris Baker who entered into a lengthy email correspondence for several months during 2016 and 2017. Similarly, Anthony Frewin agreed to email correspondence throughout 2016, Daniel Richter (Moonwatcher) agreed to correspondence in March 2017, and the author Brian Aldiss and his family entered into brief correspondence with me in September and October 2016. Initial contact was made with two senior figures within Warner Bros., Terry Semel and Julian Senior, but initial scoping correspondence eventually came to an abrupt halt, despite follow up emails. A number of other individuals were approached for an interview, including Brian W. Cook, but these were either declined or received no reply. Transcripts of the two main interviews for this project, those with Jan Harlan and James B. Harris, can be found in the appendix.

## **Thesis Structure**

This thesis was born out of a desire to understand the wider industrial conditions in which Stanley Kubrick operated as a filmmaker. It was conceived as a way of answering the questions laid out by Robert Sklar in his seminal chapter 'Stanley Kubrick and the American Film Industry' (1988), in which he argues that Kubrick's centrality to the transformation of film industry practices has been ignored by Kubrick Studies. The thesis does not necessarily define how all producers within the American film industry operate, but instead provides a new understanding as to how Kubrick emerged as a producer, developed the role, and ultimately used it to fashion a power base by the 1970s.

The structure of each chapter is laid out in their respective introductions. But I want to briefly outline the key research questions each chapter addresses. The thesis is structured around four key time periods in Kubrick's career, and each chapter presents case studies of these time periods within wider industrial contexts. The chapters aim to understand Kubrick's role as a producer, to understand his importance to the changing

circumstances of the American film industry, and to understand the impact of this upon his film production processes.

The first key phase, examined in Chapter One, is approximately between 1951 and 1955, in which time Kubrick produced and directed two privately funded features, *Fear and Desire* and *Killer's Kiss*. Kubrick emerged into a film industry that was radically different from the one he was operating in by the 1970s, and again by the 1990s. A variety of economic and industrial conditions within the film industry by the 1950s led to the 'growth of unit production' (Balio 1987: 87). This can be seen as the starting point for a new phase in American independent filmmaking as the industry moved towards a package-unit system (Tzioumakis 2006: 101-02). Producers would package a film, bringing together a temporary production outfit that was financed and distributed by the studios. At the same time, this allowed a space for independent productions that were privately financed away from Hollywood to take advantage of the changing industrial conditions. Chapter One asks what Kubrick's contribution was to the development of this new independent American cinema and, at the same time, what the impact of the changing industrial conditions had on his role as a producer.

The second key phase to be examined is from 1955 to 1963, explored in Chapter's Two and Three, and marked by two significant partnerships: the formation of the Harris-Kubrick Pictures Corporation with James B. Harris, and the contractual alignment of HKPC with Kirk Douglas's Bryna Productions. Four films were produced and released during this period. *The Killing* and *Lolita* are examined in Chapter Two, which considers how HKPC was able to navigate the changing industrial conditions of Hollywood during this time. With the increasing dominance of the package-unit system, the chapter will examine how HKPC was able to utilise these changes to grow and diversify from being a small independent company producing a pulp thriller, *The Killing*, to becoming an international production company by the production of *Lolita* some six years later. Rather than take a strictly chronological approach, Chapter Two focuses on the managerial processes of HKPC in its earliest days and in its later stages to understand how the partnership of Harris and Kubrick impacted on the company's production strategies. The chapter questions how HKPC grew as a company and how it was different from its incorporation in 1955 to its dissolution in 1962. The chapter will also question what the impact was of changing industrial conditions on the

productions and business strategies of HKPC. Chapter Three focuses on *Paths of Glory* and *Spartacus* in order to concentrate on the relationship between HKPC and Bryna and to question what the contexts were of their contractual arrangements. The chapter also questions how the changing methods of producing saw a tension emerge between the studios and the independent production companies. This tension was acutely felt over issues of publicity and promotion, areas that the studios wished to retain total control. By focusing on the collaborations between HKPC and Bryna also allows us to consider how Kubrick responded to issues of legal authority through contractual negotiations. The chapter will ask how these contracts and the wider industrial contexts impacted on the legal authority of the independent producer.

The third key phase is the 1960s, explored in Chapter Four. This builds upon the idea of a power struggle between the independent producers and the studios. The chapter asks what role Kubrick's production companies, specifically Polaris Productions, had in gaining further legal authority over his films. The focus is largely on *2001: A Space Odyssey* but with an aim to understand the working relationships between Kubrick, his vice-president of Polaris, and MGM. The chapter will ask what the managerial structure of Polaris Productions was and what its business strategies were. Ultimately the chapter will question to what extent Kubrick positioned himself as a powerful producer with legal authority over his productions by the end of the 1960s.

The fourth key phase is what I term the 'Jan Harlan' years, given that Harlan came to be Kubrick's executive producer from the 1970s onward. The period between 1968 and 1999 is examined to determine why Kubrick's production rate slowed markedly. Chapter's Four and Five both question whether this was due to Kubrick's own producing methods and the 'absolute' control he obtained, or the result of wider industrial changes in Hollywood, particularly in the post-*Jaws* years and the rise of the high-concept blockbuster. Chapter Five will ask in what ways Kubrick consolidated his power as a producer during the new Hollywood era. It will also seek to determine what the industrial contexts of the New Hollywood were on his role as a producer as well as how it contributed to the development of a 'brand Kubrick'. Chapter Six will concentrate on Kubrick in the 1980s and 1990s and specifically on his abandoned projects. This will be in order to question the producing methods of Kubrick, his level of control and authority and why there were seemingly so many failed projects during

the latter half of his career. Emphasis will be placed on his company Empyrean Films and on the pre-production of *Aryan Papers*.

These four key phases are chosen for the way they marked substantial changes in Kubrick's career, his role as a producer, and in the industrial changes in Hollywood. Each of the chapters takes a case study approach to the industrial contexts of Kubrick's career as opposed to a film-by-film case study. This means that some of Kubrick's films receive less attention than others, with the aim being to question Kubrick's producing methods and strategies within wider industrial contexts rather than merely focus on the production histories of each of his films. The films that receive closer scrutiny do so due to their significance in demonstrating Kubrick's producing methods in relation to the particular industrial contexts under discussion. The qualitative case study approach, however, demonstrates how similar research projects may carry out studies of other important producing figures to understand their position within the industrial contexts of Hollywood. A concluding chapter summarises these future potential research avenues and the position of this thesis within Kubrick historiography. More importantly, it determines Kubrick's impact on the role of the producer and whether the power he accrued impacted on his producing abilities from the 1970s onwards.

## Chapter One:

### **‘Nobody’s going to get anything out of this movie but me’: The Emergence of a Film Producer 1953-1955**

Kubrick plunged head first into the role of feature-film producer out of the necessity of his chosen method of production in the early 1950s: low-budget filmmaking. These earliest years of Kubrick’s career saw him producing in a ‘guerrilla’ mode of production i.e. operating in a mode that required ingenuity, improvisation and often without any kind of approval or authorisation. This chapter will examine the pivotal period of 1953 to 1955 in the development of Kubrick as a producer, with a case history of his second feature film, *Killer’s Kiss*. Kubrick’s early career will be situated within the industrial context of a burgeoning young movement of filmmakers in New York that contributed to a new modern American independent cinema. The 1950s was a decade of tumultuous change in Hollywood, with the studio system in demise following the Paramount Decrees of the late 1940s, along with the suburbanisation of the American city and the rise of television. The chapter will explore the industrial contexts of independent cinema and its relationship with the cinematic mainstream. For Kubrick, this meant an eventual alignment with United Artists (UA). UA was a company that had been failing in the late 1940s and early 1950s, but with new ownership by 1951 it began to chart a new industrial mode of production for Hollywood, built on the idea of nurturing new independent producers. Kubrick’s time as a low-budget independent producer saw him learn the ‘Kafka-esque nature of making, closing, breaking, etc., film deals’ (Kubrick 1962).

Kubrick operated in this period in a mode indicative of independent filmmaking. Janet Staiger suggests the key traits to independent filmmaking are ‘the relations in its work process, its means of production, the financing of its films, its conception of quality films, and its system of consumption’ (2013: 17). With *Fear and Desire* and *Killer’s Kiss*, Kubrick’s economic relationship was not to any major studio or production company, but rather private sources of income. Kubrick entered into a range of agreements and deferments with private businesses on *Killer’s Kiss*. Looking at these



traits in Kubrick's early years allows us to begin to understand the emergence of an innovative independent producer contributing both to a new independent American cinema and to a new mode of production. Kubrick is absent from several major accounts of independent filmmaking in New York in the early 1950s, including those by Kristin Thompson and David Bordwell (1994) and Blair Davis (2012). But Kubrick was a significant contributor to the new independent cinema of the 1950s (as Todd McCarthy argued in his obituary of Kubrick (1999: 22)), operating a guerrilla filmmaking mode of production that led to the eventual distribution of a privately financed film by a powerful Hollywood distribution company. Though guerrilla filmmaking is positioned as being an act of resistance by the likes of Mariagiulia Grassilli (2008), its production methods involve low-to-no budgets, with money often being invested by family and friends, while multiple production roles are performed by a single individual often waiving fees for directing or producing (1245-46). This sees a work process that is collaborative in nature, with roles and responsibilities blurring, but also seeing personal investment and the ownership of the means of production. When the term is applied to filmmaking of the type Kubrick was conducting in New York in the early 1950s (Geoffrey Cocks said *Killer's Kiss* was filmed 'guerrilla-style' (2004: 80)), archive evidence points towards him operating in such a manner. He was producing films in an impromptu fashion, involving improvisation, and at times operating without authorisation. For example, Kubrick filmed *Killer's Kiss* on the streets of downtown Manhattan without permission, paying off the police with \$20 notes (Phillips 2005: 287), with production photographs showing Kubrick being approached by police officers on location (Minotaur Productions 1954-1955).

This chapter will offer a case history of *Killer's Kiss* and the period 1953-1955 to demonstrate how Kubrick was contributing to new modes of production and the establishment of a new modern American independent cinema. This chapter, and subsequent chapters, will explore this new mode of production and Kubrick's use of the package-unit system, a type of organisational business strategy that would eventually come to dominate Hollywood by the late 1950s. The case study of *Killer's Kiss* will also allow us to see how low-budget independent producing in New York operated outside of the Hollywood mainstream in the 1950s.

### **Kubrick the Guerrilla Producer: Minotaur Productions and *Killer's Kiss***

Two years after it had been filmed, Kubrick's first full-length feature, *Fear and Desire*, was released in 1953. The film was distributed by the art-film distributor, Joseph Burstyn, and was often double-billed with Luis Buñuel's *The Brute/El Bruto* (1953) at the Roxy Theatre in Detroit (Anon. 1953g).<sup>4</sup> The film was reviewed in *Boxoffice* on 2 May 1953 under the category of 'exploitips', with the review highlighting Kubrick's guerrilla credentials, writing that it was 'produced, directed, photographed and edited' by a 'semiprofessional' (Anon. 1953f: 11). The film was described as a 'grim, moody and depressing war drama', which was 'strictly adult fare, suited only to a few key city art houses' (11). It was reviewed alongside films such as *Bad Blonde* (1953), a 'rag-bone-'n'-hank-o'-hair murder story' that is 'tragically grim' (11); *Guerrilla Girl* (1953), 'an intensely melodramatic foreign-made picture' that will 'get by as a supporting dualer' (12); and *Raiders of the Seven Seas* (1953), a pirate picture that is a 'bloody tale of a brave buccaneer and a beautiful babe', a film that isn't 'top bracket', but 'boasts sufficient gore and guts to satisfy seekers of fast-moving adventure stuff' (12). Such films were ever more necessary to American theatres, many of which were still presenting double bills and therefore needed 'inexpensive, attention-getting fare. The demand was met by independent companies that produced cheap "exploitation" pictures. Having no major stars or creative personnel, these films cashed in on topical or sensational subjects which could be "exploited"' (Thompson and Bordwell 1994: 380). These low-budget films often returned a greater profit yield for theatres than larger budget studio films (380-81).

Sometime in early 1953, shortly after the release of *Fear and Desire*, Kubrick founded his first production company, Minotaur Productions. It became a more professional and financially stable outfit by 2 September 1953, when Kubrick, the company's president, sent a letter to Morris Bousel, stating that 'the following agreements have been entered into' (Kubrick 1953): first, a stockholder's agreement between Bousel, Kubrick and Minotaur Productions; second, a loan agreement between Bousel and Minotaur Productions; and third, an employment agreement between

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<sup>4</sup> The programme described *Fear and Desire* as follows: 'Defenceless and tied to a tree, Virginia Leith, as the strange half-animal girl, faces the dramatic climax of "Fear and Desire", a film about four desperate men trapped in a forest' (Anon 1953g). The film's double-bill partner, *The Brute*, was tagged merely as being 'the story of a French prostitute' (Anon 1953g).

Kubrick and Minotaur Productions. The agreement with Morris Bousel gave him fifty per cent ownership of the company (Deluxe Lab 1953). Bousel was ‘a wealthy pharmacist and acquaintance of the Kubrick family’ (Krämer 2013a: 162). Minotaur was styled as a ‘New York Corporation having its offices and principle place of business’ in Midtown Manhattan (Minotaur Productions 1953a). Kubrick was to base himself in New York for the next two years, the centre of a burgeoning low-budget independent filmmaking scene.

The same day as the agreement with Bousel, Minotaur Productions reached a further agreement with Howard O. Sackler, a school friend of Kubrick and a budding screenwriter (Kubrick 1953). The deal saw the rights of an original story and screenplay titled *Along Came A Spider*, written by Sackler and Kubrick, being given to Minotaur, with Sackler receiving a twelfth of any net profits from any motion picture based on the story (Minotaur Productions 1953b). Two weeks later, the screenplay had already undergone a name change to *The Nymph and the Maniac* and would undergo a further name change to *Kiss Me, Kill Me* (Deluxe Labs 1953a), before finally being released as *Killer’s Kiss*. All of the film titles played into the sensationalism of other low-budget pictures of the time. The transition from screenplay to a film that was ready to be released was long and complicated and the producers faced obstacles that many low-budget film producers in the 1950s experienced; primarily, where to obtain the necessary funds in order to complete it? Morris Bousel had invested money into the picture, budgeted at \$60,000 (Deluxe Labs 1953a), but in order to secure the full financing of the project, the producer, Kubrick, had to make a number of loan agreements, deferments, mortgage pledges and promissory notes. In other words, he had to beg anyone who would listen to give Minotaur Productions cash and resources, what one banker described as the producer putting on ‘quite a show’ in order to secure funds (Sanders 1955: 387).

Kubrick made loan agreements with companies such as Deluxe Laboratories, with a number of terms and conditions attached. Deluxe Laboratories was a film processing and development plant and a wholly owned subsidiary of Twentieth Century-Fox (Anon. 1953d: 5). Deluxe was one of the biggest film developing firms in the country in the early 1950s, a time when Fox invested heavily in the company to allow it to convert to colour processing (Anon. 1951a: 3). The deal drawn up on 17

September 1953 – one of several documents drawn up between the secretary of Deluxe Laboratories, Ellis Smith, and Kubrick as president of Minotaur – stipulated several necessary clauses that the producer had to ensure were met. This included the need for the finished film to find distribution with a regular motion picture distributor ninety days after completion of the picture, the requirement that the final cut of the film be at least seven thousand feet, and the right of Deluxe Laboratories to look at the producer's complete financial books and records at all times (Deluxe Labs 1953a). In return, Deluxe advanced \$5,000 at six per cent interest, as well as supplying film and prints (Deluxe Labs 1953a).

What the agreement between Minotaur Productions and Deluxe Labs reflects is the precarious – even perilous – nature of low-budget guerrilla filmmaking in America in the 1950s. Financing independent features involved unique methods and skilful negotiating was required on the part of the producer. Generalised terminology can be applied to the various funding sources to which producers turned, these being first money, second money and completion money (Sanders 1955: 381-82). First money was so-called as it was the first money to be repaid, but was usually the last to be raised by the producing group. It financed about sixty per cent of the film (381). Second money effectively financed the film and was paid off second. This money involved huge risk to investors who usually demanded '50 per cent of the film's net profit in return for putting up a majority of the second money' (381-82). The remainder of the second money was usually through a deferment of salaries for the director, producer, writer and sometimes the main stars. Finally, there was completion money, which was sought should a film run over budget (382). In his contracts with Deluxe, Kubrick had to ensure that the company was repaid first from any profits the picture made. Minotaur, 'for the purpose of securing the payment of the indebtedness [agreed to] grant, bargain, sell, mortgage, pledge, hypothecate and assign unto Laboratory' (Deluxe Labs 1953b: 1) the following: 'all negative and positive prints of the photoplay now or hereafter produced' (1); 'all rights of every kind and nature in and to the photoplay', which included,

the motion picture rights and all other rights in the literary material on which the photoplay is based, all scripts, continuities and screen version of the photoplay, all copyrights and literature, musical and dramatic rights and properties in the photoplay or any part thereof. (1)

Such a deal may appear to be a heavy price for an advance of \$5,000, but it was how producers operating completely outside of the Hollywood mainstream were treated (Sanders 1955). Minotaur Productions were allowed to receive income from the sale and distribution of the film, 'but upon default of such documents and foreclosure by the Laboratory, then the entire income, compensation and profits will become due and payable to the Laboratory' (2). Payment of the chattel to Deluxe became immediate if Kubrick and Minotaur defaulted under the Distribution Agreement with their eventual distributor, or 'if such agreement should be terminated or amended without Laboratory's consent' (3). And should there be no payment to Deluxe, then all prints of the picture could be sold off or destroyed by Deluxe with only ten days notice been given to Minotaur Productions (4). Essentially, Minotaur had to ensure at all times that Deluxe was informed of the production process and could not impede in any way the rights mortgaged to Deluxe Labs without their written consent. The two stakeholders in Minotaur Productions, Stanley Kubrick and Morris Bousel, ratified the Loan Agreement with Deluxe Laboratories on 17 September 1953 (Minotaur Productions 1953c). In a document titled 'Affidavit of Authority and Consent to Execution of Loan Agreement: Mortgage, Pledge and Assignment', the company confirmed that they were a corporation 'party to a certain loan agreement and is the mortgager in a certain mortgage, pledge and assignment entered into between Minotaur Productions Inc., and Deluxe Laboratories Inc.,' (1953c). The document confirmed that the Board of Directors of Minotaur – Kubrick and Bousel – had 'duly and legally authorized the execution of the Documents' (1953c). The affidavit was signed 'in order to induce Deluxe to extend credit and / or part with valuable consideration to Minotaur, knowing that Deluxe intends to rely thereon' (1953c). It would seem, then, that Minotaur Productions created this document in order to secure the necessary Mortgage of Chattels with Deluxe Laboratories. The company were making numerous legal oaths – affidavits, promissory notes, Mortgage of Chattels – all in order to claim an advance from Deluxe.

A further document was drawn up by Deluxe Laboratories Inc., on 17 September 1953 titled 'Notice of Irrevocable Authority to Motion Picture Distributor of "The Nymph and the Maniac"' (Deluxe Labs 1953c). The document was to be sent to any distributors of the final film in order to inform them that Minotaur had 'entered into a loan agreement pertaining to the photoplay, to which the Lab had made an advance of

\$5000' (1953c). The document ensured that the distributors were aware of the need for Minotaur to repay Deluxe first from any income of the picture. The distributor, whoever it was to eventually be, was to be a pledge holder, authorised to pay the \$5,000 and six per cent interest. The distributor would each month forward copies of all financial statements to Deluxe, with details of the film's grosses and the 'deductions, if any, which are to be made for prints, advertising and distribution charges, and the amounts paid to the Lab' (1953c). Once Deluxe Laboratories' first lien on the income of the picture had been completely paid in full, then – and only then – could Minotaur receive its share of the proceeds according to any agreement with the distributor (1953c). Morris Bousel, who had invested his own fortune into Minotaur Productions and *Killer's Kiss*, was to be at the back of the queue for any repayments, with large corporate entities such as Deluxe forcing the company into lengthy complex legal arrangements to ensure the return of their own investment.

Independent filmmaking required the finesse of the producer in order to secure financing or, even more difficult, the arrangement of deferred fees. Deferment of salaries for the director, producer, writer and sometimes the main stars was not unheard of, with second money often being raised via this method (Sanders 1955: 382). But Kubrick, with *Killer's Kiss*, was deferring a lot more than just salaries. For example, Titra Sound Corporation, a post-production business in New York City, agreed to provide equipment and all necessary services until Minotaur Productions had 'fully completed the photoplay in all respects and we shall have notified you of such completion' (Titra Sound Corp 1953). This was on a deferment basis and was to be paid out of the net receipts of *Killer's Kiss*. Minotaur signed a Mortgage of Chattels and Loan Agreement with the Titra Sound Corporation on 19 September 1953. The document highlighted the chain of repayments Minotaur had to make on the film, with Titra's repayments 'subject to the prior rights and liens of Deluxe Labs under and pursuant to a chattel mortgage made and executed by Producer in favour of said Deluxe Laboratories Inc' (Titra Sound Corp 1953). Titra were to receive any payments *after* Deluxe. Minotaur agreed, three months after any general release of the film, to furnish Titra with 'statements and reports with respect to the receipts and disbursements' and simultaneous to such statements, 'deliver to you your share, if any, of such receipts' (1953). As of May 1954, Minotaur had already generated a debt of \$5,000 with Titra

just for the use of their dubbing studio (Titra Sound Corp 1954). The cost of the production was spiralling and Kubrick had taken the costly decision (as he had done with *Fear and Desire*) not to record sound on location, but rather to post-synchronise it. This involved arranging cast members, such as Frank Silvera, to render their services in connection with post-production dubbing.

A more important fee-deferment was when Kubrick managed to negotiate a deal with the Camera Equipment Company. By February 1955, Frank Zucker, President of the Camera Equipment Company, was writing to Minotaur to let them know they were ‘indebted to in the sum of \$20,361.42 for services rendered and materials furnished’ (Zucker 1955a), though the exact figure was disputed and could have been as high as \$24,000 (Zucker 1955b). It seemed that the Camera Equipment Company were not concerned by Deluxe Labs claim to first lien on *Killer’s Kiss*. Instead, they came to an agreement with Minotaur that the repayments of the debt come out of the film’s eventual sale to United Artists, which was already being arranged in the spring of 1955.

Kubrick demonstrated his prowess as an independent producer able to negotiate deferments when writing to Nat Sobel of Cineffects in June 1954. Explaining to Sobel that *Killer’s Kiss* was still in no state for screening due to the lengthy post-synchronisation process, Kubrick asks, ‘If without seeing the film, you would like to arrange a deferred agreement for the titles and opticals, I would be very pleased to oblige you’ (Kubrick 1954). Note the use of language by Kubrick – *you would like* and *I would be very pleased to oblige you* – as if Kubrick is providing Sobel and his business with a favour by arranging deferment of his own fees. This language may sound brazen, but it is the language of an emergent producer – a guerrilla producer – showing the level of determination and confidence needed to get a picture made on a shoestring, and sometimes no string at all budget.

*Killer’s Kiss* was finally shot on location in New York in early 1954, over a period of three months (Krämer 2014b: 11). And yet, for all the bravura Kubrick displayed in his bargaining with company after company, it was not enough to prevent him from going vastly over budget. The anticipated budget for *Killer’s Kiss* had been \$60,000, but the final budget came in at \$90,000 (Appendix III). In the deal signed with Deluxe Labs, it was agreed that should the production go over budget that the producer (Kubrick) had ‘cash, credits and deferments in its possession which will be sufficient to

complete the photoplay as contemplated by the budget' (Deluxe Labs 1953a). Schedules of cost for the film provide an insight into the way the film was budgeted and what the highest costs incurred on independent productions were. The costliest elements of the budget had been studio and equipment rental, equating to twenty-two per cent of the final budget (Appendix III). It's no surprise that in later years Kubrick would buy his own equipment to use across multiple films and thereby save money (D'Alessandro 2012: 39-42). Studio costs were negligible at just under \$1,000, with the majority of the film shot on location, as noted in a piece in the *New York Times*. The film utilised locales such as 'Manhattan's alleys, streets and rooftops, the Laurel Gardens Boxing Arena in New Jersey, a dance hall in Brooklyn, and a mannequin factory on Greene St, Downtown' (Weiler 1954). Laboratory costs came in at fifteen per cent of the budget, and recording costs at fourteen per cent, the latter including nearly \$2,000 of sound effects work. General production costs came to ten per cent of the budget, accounting for insurance costs, taxes, union fees and settlements with unions, and the cost of an MPAA Seal, itself \$700. Personnel costs (technical crew, including the cameraman and sound recordists) came in at nine per cent of the budget, with a small crew, the most expensive being the electrician and grips at just over \$2,500.<sup>5</sup> Kubrick himself received a paltry wage that equated to little more than expenses. The budget did contribute to union fees at a combined cost of around \$1,000; this was a legal requirement, with cast and crew required to 'receive a basic minimum salary prescribed by their guilds or unions' (Sanders 1955: 385).<sup>6</sup>

The small-scale cast and crew was perhaps the greatest indication of the low-budget independent mode of production Kubrick was operating. This would become a feature of Kubrick's later career, as he kept personnel costs down in order to allow for a greater shooting schedule (Appendix II). Talent costs (including all contracted actors, extras and bit players) on the film equated to five per cent of the final production budget, while the crew accounted for just nine per cent (Appendix III). The cast totalled fifteen credited actors and the crew amounted to thirteen, including Kubrick, Bousel and the composer Gerald Fried. Some of the crewmembers also acted as extras or in minor

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<sup>5</sup> The grip supports the camera operator and cinematographer in the setting up and moving of the film camera ([creativeskillset.org](http://creativeskillset.org)).

<sup>6</sup> All budgetary figures in this section can be found in Appendix III.



roles, such as David Vaughan, the film's choreographer, who played a conventioneer. In addition, Ruth Sobotka, Kubrick's then wife, was the dancer in the film's ballet sequence. Many of these individuals deferred fees or simply worked for free. This was evident from correspondence with crewmembers, such as Max Glenn, one of the film's two credited camera operators. Kubrick wrote to Glenn sometime in early 1955 stating that the \$1,000 salary that was agreed to Glenn 'in consideration of services rendered by you' will be 'paid from the net proceeds of the film [...] parri passu with the other salary deferments already incurred by us' (Kubrick n.d.).

Despite its guerrilla nature, Kubrick did utilise the standard agreement with the union International Alliance of Theatrical Stage Employees and Moving Picture Machine Operators of the US and Canada, A.F. of L (International Alliance n.d.). The agreement stated that, 'the International Alliance is the duly authorised and designated collective bargaining representative of such employees whose services are utilised by the Producer' (International Alliance n.d.). The agreement required Minotaur to display the insignia of the International Alliance on the film credits, while also obliging Minotaur to ensure, 'the wage scales [...] shall be those contained in the standard collective bargaining contracts now in effect in the N.Y. area' (International Alliance n.d.). It is not clear how closely Kubrick and Minotaur adhered to this agreement considering the number of salary deferments in place, though a dispute with the union resulted in Minotaur having to make a \$5,000 settlement (Bernstein 1964). A total of \$407.52 was paid to the film's sound men, Walter Ruckersberg and Clifford van Praag, a paltry sum due to Kubrick's decision to post-synch all sound and which led to the inflated post-production recording costs of \$13,041.85, with over \$11,000 of this being on the recording and synching of dialogue (Bernstein 1964). This was an expensive decision by Kubrick.

Minotaur negotiated a deal with United Artists in July 1955 for the company to buy *Killer's Kiss* at \$75,000, finally selling it the week-commencing 25 July 1955, two years after it had been shot. Minotaur could not rely on any profits from the film due to the various repayment deals in place. When Frank Zucker of the Camera Equipment Company learned that Minotaur was negotiating the sale of *Killer's Kiss* to UA, he wrote to Kubrick. Along with the \$75,000 for the purchase of the film, UA was to pay Minotaur 'a further sum of \$37,500 payable out of the profits' (Zucker 1955b). Zucker

arranged a deal with Minotaur for the payment of their indebtedness (which came to the sum of \$24,214.76) to be paid in two instalments; firstly, \$18,214 to be paid out of the \$75,000 UA was paying for the film and, secondly, the balance of \$6,000 to be paid 'out of 40% of any and all monies payable to you by UA on account of the sum of \$37,000 payable to you out of the profits, if any, of the picture' (1955b) – this was to be paid directly by UA to the Camera Equipment Company. The agreement was only effective should UA consummate a sale within 150 days of 17 February (1955b).

It is doubtful UA's motives in purchasing *Killer's Kiss* was due to any kind of commercial merit they saw in the picture; after all, the film's grosses would prove weak.<sup>7</sup> Instead, UA had been grooming up-and-coming young producers ever since its revitalisation under the new management of Arthur B. Krim and Robert Benjamin (discussed further in Chapter Two). Therefore, the motivation in acquiring *Killer's Kiss* can be seen as an attempt to align Kubrick and Minotaur Productions with United Artists (Anon. 1955b: 3). The deal also ensured Kubrick could pay back his investors and freed him up to 'join the UA indie producer ranks' (3). But \$75,000 was not enough to prevent Minotaur Productions from a net loss on their corporate operation of just over \$20,000 (Bernstein 1964).

This case history of *Killer's Kiss* demonstrates the risky nature of guerrilla filmmaking being undertaken by Kubrick, who produced the film with no certainty other than he could face financial ruin. The next section of this chapter will begin to situate this mode of production within the wider industrial context of low-budget filmmaking in New York in the 1950s.

### **The Transformation of Modes of Production: Kubrick and the New York Group**

Kubrick's producing of *Killer's Kiss* was part of a growing filmmaking scene in New York in the late 1940s and early 1950s, which saw producers bring to the screen movies that were outside of the traditional confines of Hollywood production (Davis 2012: 28). These 'mavericks' were enthusiastic individuals who would take their cameras on to the streets of New York and film in a realist style, often without the permission of the city

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<sup>7</sup> *Killer's Kiss* grosses were described by *Variety* as weak, with the film taking under \$17,000 in Detroit (Anon 1955e: 10), and under \$4,500 in Kansas City for the week of 27 December 1955 (Anon 1955f: 8).

authorities. Their enthusiasm contributed to the New York low-budget filmmaking scene of the early 1950s, a new wave of filmmakers that were one of just several new waves around the world; from the Italian Neo-Realists in the 1940s, to the French New Wave in the late 1950s and early 1960s, with their low-budget techniques ‘redefining the notion of film’ and creating a new modernist aesthetic in the process that ‘would enable the medium to create its own reality, its own way of speaking to and about the world’ (Kolker 2009: 5). Many of those in New York, Kubrick included, were not using corporate capital, but money raised from a range of disparate and risky sources. As Blair Davis notes:

Their productions [...] were inherently more risky than those made by the major studios, entailing radically different production methods. With financial risk far greater than it had been in recent years, independent filmmakers often struggled to fund their films – a symptom of their maverick status within the industry. (28)

This growing scene in New York was fuelled by other media, such as acting, dancing and photography, the latter the field Kubrick himself had operated in during the 1940s. The New York scene included filmmakers such as John Cassavetes, who would apply Method acting in *Shadows* (1959), and Morris Engel, a photographer who would use pioneering methods on his realist film *Little Fugitive* (1953), such as the use of lightweight 35mm cameras that anticipated Direct Cinema documentary and post-dubbed sound (Thompson and Bordwell 1994: 382).

Another key individual of this low-budget filmmaking scene was Terry B. Sanders, author of ‘The Financing of Independent Feature Films’ (1955). Sanders would go on to produce more than seventy dramatic features over the course of his career, but it was a short film he produced in the early 1950s that gained him the attention of the Academy Awards. *A Time Out of War* (1954) won the Oscar for Best Short Subject (Two Reel) and led to Sanders, along with his brother Denis, being employed by Charles Laughton on *The Night of the Hunter* (1955) as second unit directors (American Film Foundation 2009). Sanders proved that low-budget filmmaking acted as a calling card to larger budgets and to the big Hollywood distributors.

Independent producers were supposedly finding it financially easier during the early 1950s due to increased ‘competition among distributing companies for the product

of independent filmmakers', as long as the producers had 'proven merit' (Anon. 1950b: 3). This increased competition led to an 'anticipated upturn in 1950' of independent productions (3), on the back of three years of financial hardship and bankruptcy for many independent producers (3). The situation for independent producers, however, was not as comfortable as this suggests, because there was an increase in distribution fees, which came about partly as a result of the financial aid some distributors offered to independent producers. Producers were regularly faced with distributions fees of around thirty to thirty-five per cent, with even UA raising their percentage fees to approximately twenty-seven per cent in January 1950 (16). This was what *Variety* called the 'cost of artistic freedom' (Hift 1958: 3).

This group of New York low-budget producers were not affiliated to one another, but operated with similar modes of production: Helen Levitt, who produced the documentary *In the Street* (1948) shot on the streets of New York; producer-director Lionel Rogosin with *On the Bowery* (1956); Shirley Clarke's early short films set in New York; and Janice Loeb, who produced *The Quiet One* (1948) (Mekas 1970: 88). The latter film, produced by Loeb for the production company Film Documente, had been distributed by the foreign and art house specialists Mayer & Burstyn (Joseph Burstyn would handle the distribution of Kubrick's first feature, *Fear and Desire*). These films and their producers were laying the ground for a new mode of independent film production, producing pictures on extremely low-budgets but made with a new aesthetic appeal, born out of their guerrilla methods. The aesthetics of this emerging group, referred to by Jonas Mekas in the magazine *Film Culture* as the New York film school (Mekas 1970: 88), were not as important as the consideration of the way they made their films on such low budgets. Kubrick was very much a part of this group in terms of being a new breed of independent producer operating on a low budget with *Fear and Desire* and *Killer's Kiss*. Just like the Italian Neo-Realists had done, these filmmakers took their cameras out onto the streets of New York, filming immediate, direct narratives that challenged the notion of the need for costly budgets to make a commercial film. They were, in a way, precursors of the later Hollywood Renaissance, some of them producing student films, such as Terry Sanders. This group of twenty-somethings were forging not only a new independent cinema in America, but also a new way of producing films. And it was what some within the mainstream industry believed

was necessary to revitalise Hollywood. David O. Selznick was one of those calling for an injection of independent blood into the mainstream:

Young blood and young thinking is a prime pre-requisite if the picture business is to survive. It's not by accident, he feels, that the new Stanley Kramer-type of producer, with a young and vigorous viewpoint, is able to bat so high an average, whereas some of the majors, with veterans at their helm, and perhaps inhibited by too-mature thinking, find themselves unable to attract the younger fans in the same large numbers as heretofore. (Anon. 1950c: 63)

Selznick had proven the viability of independent methods with *The Third Man* (1949). The film had been co-produced with Alexander Korda on a 'shoestring approach' for a total of \$1,500,000. Only \$450,000 of this was the actual production budget, the rest being above the line costs for the advisory services of Selznick, and also for his loaning out of stars (Anon. 1950c: 63). The industry predicted an 'upturn' (Anon. 1950b: 3) of independent producers by the early 1950s, with *Variety* reporting such an upturn as having arrived by 1951. At least twenty independent productions were scheduled to shoot at the beginning of the year, including *The Big Night* (1951), *The Basketball Fix* (1951) and *Chicago Calling* (1951). Rather than obtain financing from the major distributors, which proved difficult, many of the producers turned to alternative sources outside of Hollywood and 'concerns which will release their films' (Williams 1951: 7). One reason for this spurt of independent productions, often made on budgets of less than \$200,000, was down to the 'revitalization of United Artists', though only five of the twenty films were to be UA releases, with the others having other distribution company deals, or no deals at all (7).

Another of these new young low-budget independent producers operating out of New York was Morris Engel, who produced, around the same time as *Killer's Kiss*, the drama *Little Fugitive*. The film became a successful art-house hit, distributed by Joseph Burstyn, who secured European distribution after it won the Silver Lion prize at the 1953 Venice Film Festival. Such distribution deals, made on a cash basis, covered the film's budget costs, which were approximately \$50,000 (Anon. 1953a: 15). In the USA it played extensively at New York City's Normandie Theatre, one of the city's first art house cinemas that opened in the 1930s (De Luca n.d.). Burstyn, however, did not want this independent feature to be categorised (and commercially hampered) as an art house picture. He was convinced that the film had popular appeal and was 'substantial fare for

circuit bookings' (Anon. 1953b: 5). Burstyn's strategy was to eschew the usual method trade-showing the film to exhibitors, instead arranging sneak previews of the film in 'large key houses in various cities so that film buyers can view the film with audience reaction' (5). The venues for the previews were the Mastbaum in Philadelphia, the Roger Sherman in New Haven, the Stanley in Pittsburgh, the Allen Cleveland and Adams in Detroit (5). Burstyn's strategy also included advertising the film in 'mass audience newspapers which rarely receive arty product space. Aim is to attract a general audience as well as the followers of arty house pictures' (5).

Though *Little Fugitive* and *Killer's Kiss* were of different genres (the former a comedy about a boy who mistakenly thinks he has killed his older brother, the latter a romantic noir thriller about a boxer who gets mixed up with a gangster), they attracted the attention of Hollywood. Burstyn projected that *Little Fugitive* could gross \$500,000 on circuit showings (Anon. 1953c: 3), being coupled in 1954 with *The Man Between* (1953). It had already grossed \$40,000 in its first four weeks at the Normandie theatre by November 1953 (3). This wave of low-budget independent producers proved that, in *Variety's* words, 'the amateur can enter the competitive film market on surprising film costs' (Anon. 1953c: 3). The low-budgets of *Killer's Kiss* and *Little Fugitive* dispelled the myth of the need for million-dollar production costs (Mekas 1970: 90).

Arguably, we need to revise our understanding of this growing independent filmmaking scene in New York in the 1950s. These were film producers bringing in their product on tight-budgets not in an attempt to be flagrantly anti-Hollywood, or as any kind of film movement in opposition to Hollywood, but as 'single individuals who were quietly trying to express their own cinematic truth, to make their own kind of cinema' (Mekas 1970: 89). And in order to achieve this, their production methods required a guerrilla sensibility and experience, resulting in 'low budgets, the small crews, and the visual and technical roughness imposed by the new and unpredictable shooting circumstances' (Mekas 1970: 89). There is no overriding aesthetic unifier, but rather a pattern of low-budget production, where costs were toward equipment rental, film stock and post-production, meaning that the actual production had much less money and led to a more realistic style. The production stills of *Killer's Kiss* reveal its low-budget nature, with very little crew and only a few actors, and filming taking place in grimy, empty locations (Minotaur Productions 1954-55). In fact, Kubrick purposely

shot the picture in the 'shabbier sections of New York' to save money (Phillips 2005: 285). The effect was to lend the film a realism and grit common to the film noir and urban crime thriller (285), a genre that was 'part of a larger movement in the decade in which the low-budget gangster film provided a space for experimentation for both established and beginning filmmakers' (Kolker 2011: 111). These low-budget crime films contributed to the 'movement to the streets, to location filming, that permanently changed the *mise-en-scène* of American film. *Killer's Kiss* is in part a documentary of Manhattan in the early 1950s' (111). This documentary-like realism may have been an influence of Jules Dassin's *The Naked City* (1948). Kubrick frequented Dassin's set as a stills photographer, while the rooftop chase that would take place in *Killer's Kiss*, 'with an early morning New York City skyline as background reminiscent of *The Naked City* and countless other urban crime films' (Nelson 2000: 29). One of the most memorable scenes in *Killer's Kiss*, the boxing match, was directly influenced by the lack of money on the production. The sequence is lent a visceral quality via its handheld camera shots, extreme close-ups, and rapid cuts. It was precisely because the arena in which they were filming was empty that Kubrick was forced to film in such close-ups so as to disguise this fact, as well as utilising clever post-dubbing sound to create the illusion and tension of a baying crowd. When composing the story, Kubrick and Sackler had purposely crafted it around several action sequences 'that would carry the weight of film and [ensure it would] not be costly to shoot' (285). The result, however, is a brutal and intimate boxing sequence that would influence the likes of *Rocky* (1976) and *Raging Bull* (1980).

The lack of permission to shoot on the streets or in public buildings is evident throughout the film by the presence in the background of curious onlookers. The opening title sequence sees Davy (Jamie Smith) waiting in Grand Central Station. As he paces back and forth, the camera placed on the ground, we see a cleaner sweeping past the actor, enquiringly gazing at both the actor and the camera. Similarly, in a scene on the New York subway, there are glances from surrounding passengers toward Jamie Smith as he is filmed reading a letter. Kubrick's financial constraints on the picture were leading him to experiment with his aesthetic choices, developing techniques that he would use in his later works. As Kolker argues, a number of scenes in the film are photographed through window frames, 'as if Kubrick was consciously experimenting

with framing techniques. The film's nightmare sequence, in which the camera rushes through a claustrophobic city street [...] is a source for all the major tracking shots in the films to come' (2011: 110). The low-budget influenced aesthetic was similar to the other low-budget pictures filmed in New York at the time:

The low-budgets [...] served as an impetus in freeing their work from the conventional, overused visual and dramatic forms, and also forced them to search for new angles, and in a new light. (Mekas 1970: 89)

New York developed as the hub of American independent cinema throughout the 1950s, with the low-budget independent scene in the city continuing to grow into the 1960s, at which point it consciously developed into an anti-Hollywood movement, subverting the West Coast's mode of production and control through avant-garde and experimental filmmaking. Film artists such as Stan Brakhage, Andy Warhol and Kenneth Anger, and co-operatives such as Cinema 16, approached filmmaking with a commitment to 'alternative points of view, democratic representation, and countercultural transformation' (Levy 1999: 5). A number of these early pioneers of the New York independent filmmaking scene were eventually drawn toward the avant-garde group, while others, such as Kubrick and Engel, saw their efforts in low-budget production as a means to realise larger budgets and distribution with the majors, perhaps with an eye to becoming semi-independent producers. Engel would go onto produce his next feature with a much larger budget of over \$100,000, double that of *Little Fugitive* (Anon. 1955a: 3).

We can situate Kubrick and Minotaur Productions within the industrial and cultural contexts of this independent movement in New York in the early 1950s, a history from which he is largely absent. Though not the only innovative producer at the time, Kubrick's producing methods on *Fear and Desire* and *Killer's Kiss* were still a crucial component in the burgeoning of a modern American independent cinema. Primarily, it was Kubrick's ultra low-budget methods, his guerrilla attitude to producing, that deserve greater recognition. Kubrick had persevered for several years making what were essentially amateur features, but then succeeded in attracting the attention of a major Hollywood company and actually selling it to them on a worldwide basis, the first director to make such a deal off the back of such amateurish methods of producing (McCarthy 1999: 22). Kubrick was exactly the kind of producer UA had



developed a penchant for nurturing, similar to the likes of Edward Small (*Kansas City Confidential*, 1952), Alexander Gottlieb (*The Fighter*, 1952) and Clarence Green (*The Thief*, 1952), producers who filmed on budgets of around \$100,000 to \$300,000 and that were ripe for selling for television distribution. *Killer's Kiss* proved Kubrick's credentials as an independent producer able to work on a tight budget, ideal for the kind of operation UA was running concurrent to their major programme. Nicknamed their abecedarians,<sup>8</sup> UA required that these young producers 'turn out product "at a price"' (Anon. 1954a: 5). Kubrick was the kind of producer being groomed as part of UA's abecedarian program, allowing him artistic freedom as long as he produced a film without an elaborate budget and made a profit. In part, 'it's UA's way of building important producer alignments for the future' (5). The buyout of *Killer's* led to Kubrick joining the 'UA indie producer ranks', in a deal that gave him a cut of any revenue on *Killer's Kiss* 'after UA recoups its investment' (Anon. 1955b: 3).

Kubrick had no involvement in the exploitation and distribution of *Killer's Kiss*. However, what he had done in the early 1950s was to set up a production company, Minotaur Productions, which was entirely "off-Hollywood" in its operation, and in the process contributed to an emerging mode of production: the package-unit system. The mode of production is a business strategy for 'organizing work on a wide scale' (Bordwell, Staiger, Thompson 2010). The package-unit system grew out of the demise of the studio system following the 1948 Paramount Decrees. During the classical era of Hollywood in the 1930s and 1940s, the producer-unit system had prevailed, whereby a central producer would oversee all productions at a studio, with a conveyor-belt like output of films in which cast and crew were contracted to a particular studio. The package-unit system, however, saw studios ridding themselves in the 1940s and 1950s of contracted personnel and instead subcontracting out film productions, or buying and distributing pre-packaged film projects. If we view modes of production as being business strategies, then production companies like Minotaur operating a package-unit system would be termed, in business and management studies, p-form corporations, whereby 'projects are the primary unit of production' (Söderlund and Tell 2011: 239). At this early stage in Kubrick's career, the p-form corporation was still crude but would

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<sup>8</sup> An apprentice or one who is learning the basic principles of a subject or craft.

advance drastically over the next five years as he went on to form a new business partnership. He emerged as a producer into a newly independent film industry.

But what characterised this shift to a package-unit system? Bordwell, Staiger and Thompson (1985) favour a discussion of the labour-force implications and the hierarchical structure of the new production mode, whereas Balio (1987) gives a detailed focus on the company that forged a trail-blazing new way of operating that left the other studios in its wake: United Artists. Taken together, they provide a defining context of the changing industrial practices of the 1950s. The package-unit system was essentially ‘a short term film-by-film arrangement’ (Bordwell, Staiger and Thompson 1985: 330) between an independent production company and the distributors, with the producer of the company organizing the film project by recruiting the labour and sourcing the material to be filmed. At the end of the project, the trade people returned to the labour pool, without guarantee of work, and the independent company was often dissolved (330). Kubrick operated Minotaur Productions in this way, but what we begin to see is how Kubrick functioned as a leader and a manager. The package-unit system is a wider industrial model; by analysing more minutely how production companies were organised, such as Minotaur Productions and later companies such as Harris-Kubrick Pictures Corporation, we can begin to precisely locate the way a producer works. Of course, with Minotaur Productions and *Killer’s Kiss*, Kubrick was operating his company and production pretty much single-handedly. Not only was he the executive of the whole enterprise, but also its cinematographer, editor, screenwriter, director and much more. The package-unit, however, has an emphasis on ‘cross-functional work, and the organization of expertise in designated projects [that] can generally be conceived as a mechanism for combining and integrating differentiated and complex knowledge’ (Söderlund and Tell 2011: 240). Kubrick’s future projects and the way he managed them would begin to increasingly conform to such a model. As we progress into further case studies, we will begin to uncover how Kubrick’s model and mode of production evolved and adapted, contributing to his longevity in the Hollywood mainstream for fifty years.

## **Conclusion**

This chapter has situated Kubrick's emergence as a film producer in the contexts of a film industry that was turning towards an independent mode of production. Exploring Kubrick's working methods as a producer on an ultra low-budget picture allows for a fuller understanding of the industrial constraints and practices of the independent filmmaking scene outside of Hollywood in the early 1950s. It also contributes towards answering the question first posed by Sklar: what was Kubrick's role in the transformation of film industry practices? (1988: 115) This chapter shows that Kubrick's producing style, utilising guerrilla techniques and finesse in order to secure deferments, allowed him to gain the attention of a major Hollywood company, United Artists, and to sell what was essentially an amateur picture to them for distribution. Kubrick had shown that it was possible to make a feature-length genre picture and use it as a calling card to Hollywood. Archive evidence allows us to reconstruct a picture of how Kubrick was part of a growing movement in New York, an alternative mode of production that saw producers bringing to the screen movies that were outside the traditional confines of Hollywood and film financing. These producing methods, however, carried great financial risk, with producers often struggling to obtain funding at all, arguably a 'symptom of their maverick status within the industry' (Davis 2012: 28).

Todd McCarthy (1999) sought to reassert Kubrick's importance as an independent filmmaker in the 1950s and argued that Kubrick's influence during this early period was to pioneer a new American independent cinema. McCarthy goes so far as to suggest that there was 'essentially no such thing as independent cinema' (22) prior to Kubrick making *Fear and Desire* and repeating this with *Killer's Kiss*; in the process he 'became what he believed to be the first director make a film on such an "amateur" basis and then sell it worldwide, to United Artists' (22). McCarty's claim is somewhat hyperbolic and, as this chapter has shown, though Kubrick certainly was contributing and revising the working methods of the role of the independent producer and of the managerial organisation of the independent production company – an ongoing process for him in the coming years – he was very much a part of a burgeoning, alternative scene in New York. He was one of a number of filmmakers producing ultra low-budget films that played both to a growing audience demographic for a different, Europeanised cinema, and to an increasing trend of art-house film.

Arguably though, Kubrick's concern with making these two early features was about gaining industry attention to make more ambitious pictures and much bigger budgets. This becomes clear in an interview with Terry Southern, in which he remarked 'my concern was still in getting experience and simply functioning in the medium, so the content of a story seemed secondary to me. I just took the line of least resistance, whatever story came to hand' (Quoted in Phillips 2005: 280). Whilst working on these features, Kubrick was still claiming his unemployment benefit from the US government, and filming of *Killer's Kiss* closed on Fridays to allow him to sign on (285). He had to constantly be deferential and respectful to the cast and crew working for him often on a paltry wage – if they were being paid at all – as he could not 'afford to alienate these people who were willing to work for him in such stringent conditions' (285). When Chris Chase (professional name Irene/Helen Kane), who played the lead role of Gloria Price in *Killer's Kiss*, asked Kubrick why he was being so nice to everyone on set, he replied, 'honey, nobody's going to get anything out of this movie but me' (287). Certainly, Kubrick's methods gained the attention of Hollywood, with United Artists recognising a promising producing talent. He also gained the attention of a young television producer, James B. Harris, and the two forged a relationship that would see them further innovate independent producing in the late 1950s, developing an innovative approach to the so-called package-unit system, as shall be explored in the next chapter.

## Chapter Two:

### **The Harris-Kubrick Pictures Corporation and the Diversification of the Package-Unit System 1955-1962**

The previous chapter positioned Kubrick's emergence as a producer within burgeoning new modes of production, namely independent filmmaking and the early development of the package-unit system. By the late 1950s and early 1960s, Kubrick progressed from privately financed pictures to fully packaged productions, which were financed and distributed by major companies. Both *The Killing* and *Paths of Glory* were financed and distributed by United Artists (the former with additional investment from Harris and his family), while *Lolita* was packaged and financed by Seven Arts Productions and distributed by MGM.

This chapter will detail how the changing industrial contexts of Hollywood, with the transition from the old studio system to the package-unit system, propelled by the business strategies of United Artists, saw Kubrick turn to mainstream funding sources with his first truly Hollywood picture, *The Killing*. This project saw Kubrick begin a significant business partnership with James B. Harris, who together incorporated HKPC. Harris would provide the financial stability Kubrick sought to make his films and the skills of an innovative producer. The chapter will present a case history of HKPC and the managerial and working relationship of Kubrick and Harris, looking at how they managed the company on a day-to-day basis and how the company fitted within the developing industrial contexts between 1955 and 1962. Hollywood's transition to the package-unit system was hastened by larger market trends, particularly the increase in art house cinemas with more foreign films being imported into the USA, and a move towards international production, what Peter Krämer has termed the 'post-war internationalism' of Hollywood (2017a: 261). This chapter will go further in situating HKPC in these industrial contexts and describe how the company diversified beyond the low-budget packaging of *The Killing* in 1955, to a company participating in, and instigating, international productions by 1962.

Tino Balio raises the idea of diversification in his book *United Artists: The Company That Changed the Film Industry* (1987). He briefly argues that independent production companies needed to diversify their product (film output) by the late 1950s to appeal to a changing demographic in the USA (160-162). The reorganisation of economic structures and the mode of production in Hollywood accompanied wider industrial trends, mainly the slowdown in film output by the major film studios, a downturn in domestic revenue, and increasing competition from television and international films (Balio 1985: 401-447). Balio argues that independent companies that became associated with a narrow brand of film would find it increasingly difficult to grow or to be successful at the US box office (160). This chapter will situate Harris-Kubrick Pictures within these contexts of diversification and market trends to understand how they were able to grow and succeed as an independent production company.

The first section of the chapter will provide a contextual biography of James B. Harris, particularly of his life prior to working at HKPC. Harris's role in the development of the company and its ability to diversify beyond its low-budget origins is vital. He brought with him the business acumen, financial stability, and international contacts of his father, Joseph Harris. The second section will consider the production of *The Killing* within the contexts of the business strategies of United Artists, as well as the growing trends of exploitation and art house cinema, spurred by the wider international trends of the film industry. The third section analyses the business strategy of HKPC, compared to contemporaneous production companies. It will consider why they apparently seemed to be in a state of constant project development and how this helped contribute to their later growth. It will also consider how the company changed from its incorporation in 1955 to its dissolution in 1962. The final section will place emphasis on *Lolita* and diversification, arguing how Harris-Kubrick Pictures took advantage of industrial changes in order to exploit a notorious book, which in itself allowed for a truly international production, filming in the United Kingdom and with an eye to the European market. A focus upon the ways in which HKPC responded to these international trends will suggest how they contributed to a period of rapid industrial transformation in Hollywood.

### **James B. Harris: The Boy Wonder**

James B. Harris was born in 1928 in Manhattan, though he was raised on the New Jersey shore following a family relocation (Pinkerton 2015). He moved back to Manhattan when he was fourteen where he attended the private Columbia Grammar School on West 93<sup>rd</sup> Street (Phillips and Hill 2002: 144). He considered becoming a musician, but his musical abilities were limited and so he set about working for his father, Joseph Harris, who headed the company Essex Universal (144). The company financed films for the theatrical and television market (Anon. 1959a: 7). In 1949, Harris, along with David L. Wolper, Sy Weintraub, and his father Joseph Harris, incorporated the company Flamingo Films in New York in order to distribute films to the television market as well as produce additional content (Anon. 1949a: 18). Harris was to be the company's president, while the company itself was a subsidiary of Essex Universal (Anon. 1949b: 22). Flamingo Films came about due to Harris's awareness that domestic grosses for films were falling but that 'television was becoming more popular [...] I knew that the television stations would need programming' (Appendix I). Therefore Flamingo acquired the rights to a variety of films, cartoons, and serials to distribute to the television networks (Appendix I). The company had been capitalised at \$6,000 in 1949, but by 1955 it had a yearly gross of close to \$3,000,000 (Anon. 1955c: 3). Flamingo would distribute content to the major networks and exhibited examples of their content at the 1955 National Association of Radio and Television Broadcasters convention in Washington D.C, screening shows bought by them for distribution, such as the cartoon series *Telecomics* (NBC, 1950-51), and the Henry Donovan produced adventure series, *Cowboy G-Men* (1952-53) (Anon. 1955d: 26). Between 1954 and 1964 Flamingo Films also distributed to television one of America's most watched programmes at the time, *The Adventures of Superman* (ABC, 1952-1958). Along with Sy Weintraub, his business partner at Flamingo Films, Harris was pronounced the 'boy wonder' of the industry for his pioneering of television feature film distribution in its earliest days (Anon. 1953e: 7).

Harris's experience at Flamingo was invaluable in that he learned the nature of the film business and the art of deal making. He travelled the country extensively in order to forge deals and create contracts with production companies (Appendix I). His strong credentials as a distributor of films to television led to a meeting between him

and Kubrick in July 1955 (109-110). Kubrick initially invited Harris to a screening of *Killer's Kiss*, though his intention was to sell the television rights for *Fear and Desire* to Flamingo Films (Pinkerton 2015). But the film was 'tied up in litigation' following the death of the film's distributor, Joseph Burstyn, in a plane crash (Pinkerton 2015).

Instead the meeting between Harris and Kubrick in July 1955 led them to decide to form HKPC. Kubrick, despite having a deal with United Artists, apparently had no ideas about what to film for his next project and saw the potential producing talent in Harris, including his ability to conduct financial deals and acquire rights to books (Appendix I). Harris invested a large portion of his own fortune into this new independent start-up in order to acquire literary property (Appendix I), presumably off the back of the success of Flamingo Films and his association with his father's Harris Group companies. Harris brought not only financial investment to HKPC, but also substantial industry contacts, including his father, and the lawyer Louis C. Blau, son of his father's sometime business syndicate, Joseph D. Blau, head of the National Telefilm Associates Company (Anon. 1957: 1). Joseph Blau and Joseph Harris were powerful industry players, who formed the Harris-Blau Group in order to buy a controlling stake of Republic Pictures from Herbert J. Yates in 1957 for \$5,000,000 (1). Harris was also close school friends with Kenneth Hyman, David L. Wolper, and Steve Ross, individuals who would all go on to become major figures in Hollywood.<sup>9</sup> Kubrick's biographers, such as LoBrutto, have described HKPC in its earliest days as being 'just that, Harris and Kubrick', with the two sharing a sparse office on West 57<sup>th</sup> Street in New York (1997: 111). Yet HKPC was in fact a close-knit network of family contacts and industrial ties, a model Kubrick would pursue later in his career.

Harris recalls that Kubrick and he agreed to an equal partnership (Appendix I). With Kubrick having no clear ideas for his next project, Harris visited a bookstore, Scribner's on Fifth Avenue, to search for material (Appendix I). We can begin to get a sense of the extent of what this equal partnership meant; Harris had both a financial and creative stake in HKPC and so allowed his personal interests in crime stories to lead

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<sup>9</sup> Kenneth Hyman (1928-), son of Seven Arts founder Eliot Hyman (1904-1980), was appointed the executive vice-president of Warner Bros-Seven Arts after the takeover of Warner Brothers by his father's company (Anon 1967h: 3); David L. Wolper (1928-2010) was a significant documentary and television producer, most notably for the television series *Roots* (Kaufman 2007: 36); Steven J. Ross (1927-1992) was the CEO of Time Warner, parent company of Warner Bros. (Cohen 1992).



him to Lionel White's hardboiled thriller *Clean Break* (1955), a story about the robbery of a race track in New York. Harris was convinced that this was the book that should be the first project for HKPC, saying, '[I] gave it to Stanley the next day telling him that this would make a good movie' (Appendix I). On 3 August 1955, Harris had purchased the story rights to *Clean Break* for \$10,000 (HKPC 1955). It was intended that this would be the first film produced by HKPC as part of a multiple-picture deal with United Artists (Anon. 1955c: 3).

The meeting between Harris and Kubrick was a hugely significant moment in both men's careers. Flamingo Films had equipped Harris with much needed negotiation skills, where he had learnt to secure deals and contracts with various production companies (Appendix I). Harris also brought his personal contacts and financial stability to the company. All of this was vital if Kubrick and him were to successfully steer HKPC into the heart of Hollywood. The next section will explore the ways in which HKPC grew and diversified between 1955 and 1962, with a focus on *The Killing* and *Lolita*.

### ***The Killing*, Exploitation, and Art House Cinema**

By 1956, approximately two-thirds of films made in Hollywood were done so through so-called participation agreements with independent production companies (Anon. 1956o: 11). This saw independent companies packaging a picture, providing a script, budget, cast and crew to a major company, and in return receiving some form of financial backing and distribution. But as Hollywood transitioned towards this mode of production the number of films released by the likes of MGM and Paramount declined significantly (11). Paramount's Production chief, Frank Freeman, put this down to the changing economic circumstances in Hollywood, with the new mode of production making it difficult to 'plan a specified number of pictures annually', but that also the cost of production had risen (11). The latter was, in part, a result of how the package-unit system allowed stars and producers to negotiate their own terms and to participate in profits of films made by their own production companies. As Freeman complained, 'top stars can command as much as one-half of the profits with the studio taking all the investment risk' (11). And to compound this industrial trend, the distributors were finding that less of their income was coming from the domestic market. In 1940-41,

approximately seventy-five to eighty per cent of Hollywood's revenue came from the domestic market, compared to around twenty to twenty-five per cent from the foreign market (11). In contrast, by 1955-56, approximately forty-two to forty-five per cent of revenue came from the foreign market (11).

At the same time, there was an increase in European and non-American films imported to fill the gap in exhibition schedules. Between 1956 and 1957, only 287 features were produced in Hollywood, 'but more than 600 full length films were imported from other sources' (Myers 1957: 15). In addition, American productions increasingly took to filming overseas, taking advantage of, among other things, European government subsidies. These 'runaway productions' caused consternation within the industry, particularly among unions who feared that it was leading to specialised roles being given to overseas workers (Fenwick 2017a: 196; Anon. 1960b: 3, 63). Frank Freeman issued a stark warning to those with such fears: without foreign market revenue, most of the Hollywood majors would be out of business and therefore, 'companies must produce pictures with an international appeal' (Anon. 1956o: 11). One company to buck the trend in decreased production output was United Artists, the company that pioneered the package-unit system in Hollywood in the 1950s. The operating control of UA, founded in 1919 by Charlie Chaplin, Mary Pickford, D.W. Griffith, and Douglas Fairbanks to give them control over their own productions, was acquired by Robert S. Benjamin and Arthur B. Krim in February 1951, with the intent of reorganising and revitalising the company (Anon. 1951b: 8). Krim and Benjamin were lawyers at the law firm Phillips, Nizer, Benjamin and Krim, and secured the financial takeover of UA with the backing of the Walter E. Heller financial company, which had assets of over \$56,000,000, a net income of \$1,148,567 in 1950, and had been connected to other film financing deals in the past (Anon. 1951c: 9). Krim and Benjamin themselves had no film management experience, but represented artists and writers, and this led to them being 'called upon in 1951 to rescue' UA (Medavoy 2014: 33). In part, this lack of film experience contributed to the company's new business direction, which saw Krim and Benjamin implement an 'innovative and successful practice of financing the films of independent producers, directors, actors and writers [...] while providing them with unprecedented levels of creative autonomy' (33). Prior to the takeover by Krim and Benjamin, UA had been at the point of bankruptcy, but by

1955 had taken a world gross of \$45,000,000 (Anon. 1956n: 3), and had a target of \$70,000,000 by 1957 (Anon. 1957d: 25).

UA had a new policy direction under Krim and Benjamin and the company took an active role in the development of new up-and-coming independent producers, placing them in their minor funding stream, nicknamed the ‘abecedarian program’ (Anon. 1954a: 5). UA saw HKPC as part of this programme, in which films were produced on budgets of around \$100,000 by producers like Edward Small and Alexander Gottlieb (5). The films were generic fare, cheaply made but seen as being commercially viable. The abecedarian programme ran alongside UA’s major programme; the latter saw its major producing talent – the likes of Stanley Kramer and Hecht-Lancaster – continue to output between twenty and twenty-four A pictures each year (5). Producers placed on the abecedarian programme tended not to have previous production experience, and would certainly not have handled large budgets, but were being given ‘full financial backing plus a distribution deal’ (5).

In many respects, UA viewed these producers, including HKPC, as apprentices who could produce films at ‘unelaborate cost levels. Aimed for are commensurately modest profits while the tyros are being groomed for the big-time’ (5). Others that were part of the abecedarian programme included Samuel Goldwyn Jr. (*Man With the Gun*, 1955), Robert Jacks (*A Kiss Before Dying*, 1956; *The Killer is Loose*, 1956), Robert Goldstein (*Black Tuesday*, 1954; *The Brass Legend*, 1956; *Crime of Passion*, 1957), Arnold Laven (*The Vampire*, 1957), Frank Seltzer (*The Boss*, 1956; *Terror in a Texas Town*, 1958), Jules Levey (*Vice Squad*, 1953), and many others. Their films were usually cheap genre pictures: urban crime thrillers, film noirs, westerns, or horror and science fiction. The narratives were of the exploitation and pulp-fiction variety. From revenge westerns, in which the male protagonists sought to kill gangs that had somehow wronged them, such as raping his wife in *Robber’s Roost* (1955), to the hero being targeted by a serial murderer in *The Brass Legend*. These films were set in gritty, dark, and seedy environments, dominated by urbanity and masculinity, and starring actors known for their roles in thrillers and crime films, such as Edward G. Robinson, Robert Mitchum, Leo Gordon, and Sterling Hayden. They also proved to be highly successful at the box office, with the likes of *Vice Squad* grossing over \$1,000,000 domestically (Anon. 1954a: 16). Therefore, the choice of Lionel White’s *Clean Break* as their first

feature situates HKPC within the production output of UA's abecedarian programme. It also chimed with Harris's own penchant for hardboiled crime stories, which he would continue to produce and direct once his partnership with Kubrick came to an end.<sup>10</sup> Harris has confirmed his lifelong attraction to crime stories due to the disorderly lives of their characters (Appendix I). He has spoken of how he became enamoured with White's *Clean Break* and 'never got over' that, returning again and again to stories of anti-heroes and the underbelly of society (Appendix I).

Harris conducted negotiations for the financing of the film with UA throughout August and September 1955. They finally agreed to finance \$200,000 toward the production. But the deal was hardly groundbreaking, with Joseph Harris explaining to his son that it was a basic deal, with the company neither paying for the writing of the script nor paying back the money for the literary rights to *Clean Break* (Appendix I). UA were a company without overheads, operating a sub-contracting system of production. The company gave a minimal budget to untested producers and expected commercially viable, if somewhat low-budget product in return, which they would then distribute with no input from the independent producers. UA were essentially, in Harris's words, 'investing nothing and [...] sending us out to try and put a package together and bring it to them' (Appendix I). Harris set out to package the film in a way that would entice UA. He continued the pulp theme with the hiring of author Jim Thompson (*The Killer Inside Me*, 1952; *After Dark, My Sweet*, 1955) to write the screenplay for \$1,850 (HKPC 1955). Harris followed the same tactic when casting. He sent copies of the script to the Jaffe Agency, where he was a client (Appendix I). They provided him with a list of names of actors that had appeared in crime films, such as Steve Cochran (*White Heat*, 1949) and Sterling Hayden (*The Asphalt Jungle*) (Appendix I). Hayden agreed to take the lead role and so, with a star and script in place, Harris took the package back to UA, but they were unimpressed, particularly the idea of having Sterling Hayden in the lead role (Appendix I). This was probably due to his lacklustre box office performance in other UA product such as the Edward Small produced western *Top Gun* (1955), and a number of low-budget Republic westerns, such as *Timberjack* (1955), *The Last Command* (1955), and *Shotgun* (1955).

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<sup>10</sup> Harris directed a trilogy of crime films: *Fast Walking* (1982), *Cop*, and *Boiling Point* (1993).

# the new UA team



Figure 2: The advert placed by Harris and Kubrick against the wishes of United Artists (Anon 1956a: 17).

1. the producer: James B. Harris

2. the director: Stanley Kubrick

\* the suspense picture of the year; **"THE KILLING"**

Instead, UA tried to interfere with the package, putting forward the name of Victor Mature, star of epic biblical tales such as *The Robe* (1953) and *Samson and Delilah* (1949), though this would have delayed the production by a year and a half until he became available (Appendix I).

Harris hired a production manager, Clarence Eurist, to draw up a detailed budget for a twenty-three day shoot, with the cost coming to \$330,000 (Appendix I). The hiring of Eurist, recommended by UA (Appendix I), continued the alignment of HKPC to the abecedarian programme. Eurist had been production manager on other low-budget UA films, including *The Killer is Loose* and *Dragon's Gold* (1954). To make-up for the shortfall in the budget, Harris needed another \$130,000. UA warned Harris that such a budget was unacceptable and that should HKPC put up the shortfall in the budget from other funding streams, UA would have to be paid back first (Appendix I). As HKPC were insistent on using Sterling Hayden in the lead, UA would not commit to a budget over \$200,000 (Appendix I). Harris had savings of around \$80,000 from his time at Flamingo Films and was able to negotiate a \$50,000 investment from his father (Appendix I; LoBrutto 1997: 115-116). Having contributed the required \$130,000, Harris facilitated the twenty-three-day shoot and lengthy 10 weeks of post-production to commence.

\$330,000 was unusual, but not altogether uncommon for a picture considered low budget at the time. Other UA films had been budgeted at similar, if not higher cost. *Kiss Me Deadly* (1955) had a budget of \$410,000, but this was a Robert Aldrich project, a director who, though with few features to his name, had directed Burt Lancaster in the \$1 million *Apache* (1954), and the \$1.6 million *Vera Cruz* (1954) with Gary Cooper and Burt Lancaster. Harris was a first-time feature film producer working with an unknown, if precocious, director. They were part of the unofficial abecedarian programme, which saw producers operating on budgets of \$200,000, such as W. Lee Wilder's Planet Filmplays produced *The Big Bluff* (1955) and Mark Stevens' *Timetable* (1956).<sup>11</sup> *Timetable* was produced in parallel to *The Killing* (Anon. 1955i). In fact, the similarities with HKPC are striking. Mark Stevens, the director and producer, formed Mark Stevens Productions in 1954 (Fertig 2013), along with Jack Gross and Philip Krasne, with the

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<sup>11</sup> Despite numerous references to the film as *Time Table*, the AFI Catalogue lists it as just one word, *Timetable* (afi.com).

intention of making two features a year (Anon. 1954b: 3). *Timetable* was his first feature, based on an original story by Robert Angus (Lyons 2000: 148). *Variety* announced Stevens's alignment with UA in November 1955, when the company 'made an outright purchase of his initial independent venture, "Time Table"', with UA to also finance and distribute a follow-up low-budget picture (Anon. 1955i: 4). Stevens was being aligned with UA and its abecedarian program in the same way HKPC had been. Unfortunately, Mark Stevens Productions soon crumbled and the company made no subsequent features (Fertig 2013).

The mid-1950s saw a rapid increase in independent producers incorporating their own production companies, hastened by the decline of the classical Hollywood studio system. The traditional movie studios – the majors such as Warner Bros., MGM, and Paramount – streamlined themselves of their contracted stars, directors, and producers, turning their focus to television production and leaving movie production to the independent companies and producers, serving mostly as financiers and distributors (Schatz 1989: 439). The major movie studios were 'movie production companies only in a marginal sense' with 'Hollywood a different industry' by the mid-1950s (439). One significant independent company incorporated at this time, and explored in more depth in Chapter Three, was Bryna Productions, established by Kirk Douglas in 1955 in Los Angeles (Hilmes 2016). As Gene Arneel reported, 'rarely has any new movement taken on such dimensions in such limited time as the swing toward the formation of independent companies' (1955: 1). UA was at the centre of this rise of the independent production company, encouraging an array of big stars and small producers to align with them, just as they had HKPC. Douglas's Bryna aligned with the distributor in 1955 with *The Indian Fighter* (1955) as its first picture. Other majors were struggling to cope with the industrial transformation being wrought by UA, doing 'double takes with the way performers are incorporating' (Arneel 1955: 1). 1955 alone saw the likes of Frank Sinatra, Robert Mitchum, Joan Crawford, Rita Hayworth, and Henry Fonda, 'all aligned with UA and chances are that numerous others will make the plunge' (1). Between 1955 and 1956 the company had invested \$35,000,000 into forty-one productions, 'excluding deferments and profit participations' (Anon. 1956n: 18). The company had set a strategy by 1955 of releasing at least four pictures a month, and at least forty-eight annually (18) – seventy-six by 1957 (Anon. 1957d: 26) – subverting the industry trend

that had seen other major companies limit their product output and cut back on production deals (Anon. 1956n: 18). Without overheads, Krim and Benjamin seized on the opportunities offered by the rise in independent production companies, allowing them to contract a range of directors, writers, producers, and stars to offer a diverse product output. Key to the success of their independent model, however, was in the way the company retained control over the promotion of the pictures, creating a ‘progressive promotion program’ leading to an increase in promotion budgets and an increase in film revenue (Anon. 1957d: 28).

Yet there was a clear division of tiers between the performers-producers, such as Kirk Douglas and Burt Lancaster, and the lowly independent producer of the second tier abecedarian programme in which HKPC found themselves. Contemporary features being made as part of this program were often dismissed in the press as ‘mellers’ (melodramas), competently made but exploitative in nature and made to play as support on a double-bill. Take a film like *The Big Bluff* directed by W. Lee Wilder; it was reviewed as being a ‘modest melodrama [...] tailored to the demands of the program market [...] will be an asset in twin bill bookings’ (Gilb 1955: 20), while the narrative is described as being ‘routine’ (20). Similarly, *The Killer is Loose* was described as being in the suspense-thriller category but having ‘average b.o. prospects’ and being a basic Hitchcockian ‘meller’ (Gilb 1956: 6).<sup>12</sup>

Harris made the assessment that producing *The Killing* on the \$200,000 offered by UA alone would result in a picture of *The Big Bluff* variety; that it would have to be produced on a much shorter shooting schedule; and that Kubrick’s creativity would be hampered. So Harris ignored the warnings of UA and invested an additional \$130,000 and left New York for Los Angeles in September 1955 to begin work (Anon. 1955g: 24). *The Killing* went into production with a working title of “Bed of Fear” and shooting commenced on 2 November 1955, with an estimated finish of 29 November 1955 (Anon. 1955h: 20). HKPC had no control over the distribution and promotion of *The Killing* once it was handed over to UA. However, Harris did attempt to publicise the film (and the HKPC brand) with a full-page advert in *Variety* to celebrate HKPC as the ‘new UA team’ (see Figure 2 above) and then with another advert on 13 June 1956,

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<sup>12</sup> Cinematography on *The Killer is Loose* was by Lucien Ballard, who also performed the duty on *The Killing*.



describing the film as being ‘like no other picture since “Scarface”’ (Anon. 1956b: 19). Harris also began enlisting the services of a publicist, Kay Proctor, to generate Academy Award attention for the film. On 29 October 1956, Proctor sent a letter to Harris saying she had designed an advertising slogan for *The Killing*: ‘The Killing is tailor made for an Oscar’ (Proctor 1956). She gave Harris permission to use this phrasing or the similar ‘Oscar calibre’ (Proctor 1956). The ad was eventually published in *Variety* on 14 November 1956. Harris’s efforts did not prevent *The Killing*’s poor commercial performance, and he lost his \$130,000 investment (Balio 1987: 158). But the film did become somewhat of a minor hit on the art-house circuit, including in Minneapolis. The film had been an absolute box office failure in the major Minneapolis downtown theatres in the early summer of 1956, but by August of that year, *Variety* reported that the film was ‘doing sensational business at, of all places, a local neighborhood [sic] “fine arts” theatre, the Campus’ (Anon. 1956f: 1). This was despite UA’s insistence that the film was a non-art crime thriller.

There had been considerable growth in art house cinemas in the 1950s and an increase in the screenings of European films, with cultural and critical prestige being heaped upon filmmakers such as Ingmar Bergman, Federico Fellini, and Francois Truffaut (Anon. 1959i: 7). These avant-garde and European films blurred the boundaries between exploitation and art, with their representation of sex on screen (what *Variety* called the ‘busty boom’, in reference to stars such as Brigitte Bardot (7)) able to be marketed equally in an art house university theatre and in an exploitation cinema on New York’s 42<sup>nd</sup> Street, as *Variety* reported:

An example of just how the schizophrenia is manifest: several weeks ago an importer opened in New York his latest foreign pic accompanied by much ballyhoo about the film’s profound theme and artistic treatment. Following a general drubbing by the critics, pic was yanked from the art house and now is being readied for release as a lust-and-violence exploitation feature. (Anon. 1959i: 7)

By the 1950s, exploitation ‘came simply to denote a low-budget genre film that is blatantly gratuitous, prurient and very definitely *not* art’ (Hunter 2008: 97), which perfectly describes the kind of urban revenge thrillers being made as part of UA’s abecedarian programme. As I.Q. Hunter has argued, Kubrick drew on both art aesthetics (he delighted in watching European art movies and avant-garde films with his friend Alexander Walker (Krämer 2017a: 251)), and exploitation (Hunter 2008: 97). Hunter

specifically examines *A Clockwork Orange* as an art-exploitation film, but Kubrick emerged as a film director in the 1950s working on low-budget material within an exploitation context; *Fear and Desire* features gratuitous sexual themes, *Killer's Kiss* a violent showdown in a warehouse filled with nude mannequins.

Such blurred boundaries saw no theatres agreeing to book *The Killing* in Minneapolis other than the Campus, an art cinema located next to the University of Minnesota. The Campus ran an ad campaign nicknamed the 'double-your-money back guarantee' (1): if theatregoers did not find the film the most suspenseful picture of the year, they got a refund – the theatre received no refund requests (20). The manager of the Campus had made the decision to book the film when his 'attention was called to the film's merits and to the fact that its downtown stint had undoubtedly passed practically unnoticed and that few people probably were aware it had already played here (it hadn't even garnered a newspaper review)' (1). The largely student demographic made the film one of the Campus's biggest grosses, despite the owner of the Campus being discouraged from booking the film, 'with emphasis on the fact it isn't an "art" attraction' (20). The success of *The Killing* at Minneapolis's the Campus Theatre was replicated at other art house venues, including Pittsburgh's Guild Theatre. The Guild's owners saw *The Killing* as being 'late-summer filler before the top foreign fall product', but the film became one of the theatre's highest grossing films of the year and its booking was extended long into the autumn (Anon. 1956g: 4). The owners of the Guild explained that the film was 'running way over and above takes for some of the outstanding overseas product [...] playing lately'; this included Jules Dassin's heist thriller *Rififi* (1955) (Anon. 1956h: 9). The Guild Theatre was located in Pittsburgh's Squirrel Hill district, which contained two private universities.

With a non-linear narrative, voice-over, and existentialist themes, *The Killing* resonated with a growing youth demographic that were increasingly attracted to foreign and avant-garde films. HKPC had attempted to diversify beyond the aesthetic and financial constraints of UA's low-budget abecedarian programme by producing an ambitious art-exploitation film. As Hunter has suggested, 'art films were understood to promote distance and intellectual contemplation whereas exploitation incited low, kinetic and wholly non-bourgeois responses – arousal, emotional engagement, corporeal thrills' (2008: 101). Reviews of *The Killing* acknowledged both its 'intellectual

contemplation' and its 'emotional engagement, corporeal thrills'. *Sight and Sound's* Gavin Lambert described the film as a 'shrewd, engrossing, complete-in-itself melodrama' (1956: 95). He recognised that Kubrick's aesthetic simplicity, his reliance on 'simple long takes that extract full meaning from what is said', gave the film a complex, psychological depth (95-96). *Variety* described it as a 'suspenseful melo', and as 'sturdy fare for the action market, where it can be exploited for better than average returns' (Anon. 1956d: 6). At the same time, *Variety* identify one of the reasons for why the film would not perform well at the box office, describing the film as being 'occasionally told in a documentary style, which at first tends to be somewhat confusing' (6). The experimental technique of the editing lent itself more to the art house demographic. *The Manchester Guardian* proclaimed Kubrick the 'new master of the thriller' and found it quite incomprehensible that the film was playing 'as a humble "second feature" at the Dominion' and other cinemas across London. The paper predicted that the film indicated Kubrick was going to 'leave his mark on the American cinema' and that he was already 'the peer of John Huston' (Anon. 1956e: 3).

Lambert's comparison of Kubrick to Huston is not without basis. Huston largely adapted the films he made, either by himself or with a co-writer; they were often dominated by damaged male protagonists; they predominantly, but not exclusively, marginalised female roles; and he commenced his career working on pulp and urban crime thrillers (*The Maltese Falcon* (1941); *The Asphalt Jungle*), before progressing to more literary and prestigious adaptations (his 1956 adaptation of Herman Melville's *Moby Dick* (1851) and 1979 adaptation of Flannery O'Connor's *Wise Blood* (1952), for example). Kubrick would do the same as he turned his attention to his future projects.

### **Management and Administration at the Harris-Kubrick Pictures Corporation**

This section will explore how HKPC was managed, drawing on business papers and correspondence from the Stanley Kubrick Archive. These documents provide an insight into the working relationship between the two company executives and their methods of producing between 1956 and 1962 and how the company was able to achieve success.

I want to look first at the state of HKPC by 1961-62, a transition period that saw Kubrick exhibiting more administrative control of the company. By the end of 1962 the company would be mutually dissolved as Harris wanted to commence his own directing

career, and Kubrick wanted to become his own producer (LoBrutto 1997: 229). By the final full year of its operation, HKPC was an established independent Hollywood company with international ties to the UK (where they had taken advantage of government subsidies on *Lolita* (Fenwick 2017a: 195-196)), and Germany (*Paths of Glory* had been filmed in Munich and other parts of the country), part of a growing trend toward internationalism in post-war Hollywood. This saw the ‘Europeanisation’ of the American film industry (Krämer 2017a: 264), with greater use of European studios, locations and personnel, part of what has been labelled the ‘runaway production’ (see Fenwick 2017a). HKPC also had affiliations to a number of major Hollywood companies such as Columbia, MGM, United Artists, and Seven Arts. The company had expanded to the point of having ten individuals on its payroll that received monthly salaries and expenses by March 1962, including Harris and Kubrick (Anzarut 1962). This also included employing the services of a publicist, Benn F. Reyes, from the Public Relations and Allied Services company, who received over \$500 a week (Anzarut 1962). Reyes would eventually replace Roger Caras as the vice-president of Kubrick’s Polaris Productions in 1967. Kit Bernard was also employed for reading services (Anzarut 1962) – presumably to read potential literary material, a role Kubrick would consistently attribute to an individual on his staff (it was later allocated to Anthony Frewin, and, in the late 1980s, to an entire team of readers at Kubrick’s Emphyrean Films (see Chapter Six)).

HKPC had evolved in the era of the package-unit system and, despite its small size, was very much holding its own with other independent production companies. The payroll of staff was similar to one of the most successful independents in Hollywood at the time, the Mirisch Company, which had produced several commercial successes as part of a deal with United Artists, including *Some Like It Hot* (1950), *The Apartment* (1960), and *The Great Escape* (1963) (Anon. 1964d: 6). Mirisch also employed ten permanent staff members, including a lawyer and a publicist (Kerr 2011: 118). This was emblematic of the way independent producers and companies were operating. Independent companies were able to employ whom they wanted, to pick their own physical locations and property, and to contract their own staff, technicians, and equipment (Kerr 2011: 119). But this mode of production carried risks, mainly in that a proposed package would not be picked up for financing or distribution by a major

studio. This contributed to HKPC being in a state of constant development and therefore purposely developing a number of projects that would inevitably be abandoned. This is touched upon by Peter Krämer in his analysis of the unmade projects of Kubrick, suggesting that the company's many unrealised projects were a result of the 'assumption that most of them would be rejected' by major studios (2017b: 383). I want to go further in this analysis of HKPC's operation, expanding it to the wider industrial contexts of the time and the development of the package-unit system.

HKPC was hiring screenwriters or purchasing and optioning scripts for projects that would never go beyond development. By some estimates, anywhere between twenty-five and thirty projects were in someway briefly considered by the company during its existence (Ulivieri 2017). For instance, on 8 January 1962, \$600 was paid to an individual named Boardman for the purchase of a screenplay titled 'Project 2' (Anzarut 1962). Other independent companies, including the likes of Seven Arts, would consistently have projects in development. By 1963, Seven Arts had at least twenty projects in contractual development, but only seven were actually put into production (Anon. 1963a: 3). So too Kirk Douglas's Bryna Productions, with at least twenty-seven projects in some form of development or consideration by September 1957, many with contractual deals in place, including with HKPC (Norton 1957a) (see Chapter Three). Between 1955 and 1962 Bryna also considered numerous projects that were not even to star Douglas himself. This was on the advice of his lawyer and accountant, Sam Norton, who suggested it would lead to considerable tax advantages for Douglas personally (Douglas 1989: 262).

Research by Peter Krämer (2016; 2017b) and Filippo Ulivieri (2016; 2017) has uncovered a range of stories considered by HKPC, including *The Blind Mirror*, a crime thriller set in Paris, and *The 7<sup>th</sup> Virginia Cavalry Rider*, based on a true story from the American Civil War. HKPC also commissioned original stories, such as asking pulp crime author Jim Thompson to write a treatment for a project titled *Lunatic at Large* circa 1956 (Ulivieri 2017). It was a story designed around the conceit that the 'audience must try to work out which of the characters is an axe murderer escaped from an asylum' (Child 2010). Other projects included *Natural Child* (1952), a Calder Willingham novel that was considered for adaptation around 1956 (Ulivieri 2017). HKPC eventually employed the author to work on the screenplay for *Paths of Glory*;

and *The German Lieutenant*, considered in 1959, and one of the few projects that ‘came reasonably close to principal photography’ (Krämer 2017b: 385).

It is difficult to validate how seriously any of these titles were considered and for what purpose they were attached to HKPC. Research for this thesis has discovered other works not mentioned by Krämer and Olivieri, with HKPC registering titles with the Writers Guild of America. Sometime in April 1959, for instance, they registered the title *The Fool, the Fatman, and the Hunchback*, which *Variety* referred to as ‘a possible indie’ (Anon. 1959b: 15). It was standard industry practice to register scripts with the Writers Guild of America (WGA) – HKPC paid monthly dues of \$7.50 to the WGA (Anzarut 1962) – while film titles were registered with the MPAA’s Title Registration Bureau, regardless of whether the producer or production company intended to use the title. Available evidence in the form of correspondence and business papers does suggest, however, that there was significant development expenditure between February 1959 and January 1960 on at least four unrealised titles. Firstly, *Laughter in the Dark* (1938), a translation of Nabokov’s *Kamera Obskura* (1932), which HKPC developed with actor Carlo Fiore at a cost of \$2,000 (Anzarut 1962). Fiore was close friends with Marlon Brando, whom HKPC had signed a contract with in 1958 to produce a movie (LoBrutto 1997: 155; 158-159). Secondly, *Sick Sick Sick* (based on Jules Feiffer’s collection of satirical cartoons published in 1958) developed at a cost of \$993.37. Thirdly, a project referred to as ‘16 Million’, authored by Jim Thompson and totalling \$2,700 (Anzarut 1962); this would have been the Bryna-HKPC adaptation of *I Stole \$16,000,000* (1956), ‘autobiography of the master safe cracker of the 1920s, Herbert Emerson Wilson’ (Barbiaux 1958). Finally, a project simply titled ‘Dick Adams’ developed at a cost of \$2,625 (Anzarut 1962).<sup>13</sup> For a brief eleven-month period, HKPC spent a total of \$8,318.37 on the development of four unrealised projects.

They also regularly paid freelance researchers to conduct research trips. Company receipts show that an airfare was paid for a ‘technical adviser’ to conduct a research trip to Germany and Italy in April 1962 (Anzarut 1962). The receipts confirm this was for the project *The German Lieutenant*. The technical adviser conducted a

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<sup>13</sup> The only noticeable cultural relevance such a title has is to the baseball player, Richard ‘Dick’ Leroy Adams (1920-2016) who briefly played for the Philadelphia Athletics in 1947. Given Kubrick and Harris’s passion for baseball, it is possible they wanted to make a film about the sport (baseballalmanac.com).

further research trip in May 1962 for nearly \$900, while Fritz Harlan (Jan Harlan's father) undertook location research for the project in December 1961 (Anzarut 1962). Fritz Harlan was a professor of music at the Musikhochschule in Freiburg im Breisgau (LoBrutto 1997: 148). Other researchers were paid to explore potential properties. One researcher was paid \$130 on 25 April 1962 to look into the copyright for Aleksandr Kuprin's *The Duel* (1905) (Anzarut 1962). The book has obvious thematic connections to *Barry Lyndon*, telling the story of social advancement of a military officer who demands a duel to gain satisfaction following an extramarital affair (Billings 2012). As HKPC searched for novels to adapt, they submitted copies of the books to the MPAA's Geoffrey Shurlock to gauge the level of acceptability of the content according to the Production Code Administration (PCA). Quite often Shurlock would deem the material unacceptable. For instance, he could not conceive of how HKPC would manage to adapt Felix Jackson's *So Help Me God* (1955), a political book about the Un-American Activities Committee that was of such a 'highly controversial nature that it might get into the area of questionable industry policy, over and above any specific Code violation' (Shurlock 1956a). Similarly, Willingham's *Natural Child* was deemed unacceptable due to its 'extremely light and casual approach to the subject of illicit sex' and the topic of abortion (Shurlock 1956b).

We can consider the choice of projects by HKPC – what Krämer has suggested were topics that appealed to the desire by major studios to extend 'the boundaries of sexual representations on screen [...] so as to exploit the resulting controversies' (2017b: 384) – as resulting from the economic structures and organisation of independent production companies. Mirisch, and similarly Hecht-Hill-Lancaster and Bryna, could be said to have had a relationship with the content of the films they produced (Kerr 2011: 120). Paul Kerr's study of the Mirisch Company-produced *Some Like It Hot* posited that the film was symptomatic of their 'house style'. The management and administration of Mirisch, and its business policies, actively influenced their projects and the aesthetic of their directors, even someone as notable as Billy Wilder. Kerr's study is based on textual analysis rather than any archival evidence, but does raise interesting questions about the kinds of films being made by package-unit independent production companies and the reputation this lent them in Hollywood.

A number of package-unit independents in the 1950s and early 1960s were producing 'narratives dramatizing the assembling of an ensemble of experts for a specific project, with caper or heist films [...] also centering on the putting together of a team for a one-off job' (Kerr 2011: 123); films such as *The Asphalt Jungle* (1950), *The Magnificent Seven* (1960), *Ocean's Eleven* (1960), *The Great Escape* and, of course, *The Killing*. The drive to produce these particular brands of film was because of the industrial imperative of 'the package-unit indies [...] these might best be summarized as maximizing profits (and thus maximizing the attractions of each film) while minimizing risks and costs' (Kerr 2011: 123). Star attraction and genre were combined, but the narratives also reflected the independent constraints under which the films were made. Industrial contexts beyond just censorship often propelled independent producers and their companies towards particular genres, particularly when seeking financing and distribution with the likes of United Artists. As discussed above, UA influenced independent producers to produce low-budget crime thrillers and heist films out of a business strategy of their own.

But not all independent production companies – certainly not HKPC – remained constricted to any one particular genre. To do so would have presented significant financial risk given the inherent dangers of independent production, most significantly that of product differentiation. Throughout the 1950s, marketing and promoting the unique selling points of a film became crucial and relying on particular generic fare was not a guarantee of box office success. Producers such as Stanley Kramer and companies like Hecht-Hill-Lancaster 'placed their eggs in single baskets – each produced essentially one kind of picture. Since these types only had limited appeal, the producers placed themselves at a disadvantage from the start by not diversifying' (Balio 1987: 160). Diversification in its most basic business history definition is the 'expansion of the scope of business activities [...] to avoid overreliance on a narrow range of products' (Kurian 2013: 92). The 'house style' of HKPC, if they can be said to have had one, was their ability to move from genre-to-genre with each picture. They became more ambitious in scope and turned to literary adaptation (adapting Vladimir Nabokov, which in itself was a means to raise their artistic ambition and profile), black comedy (the use of Peter Sellers), and controversy (they recognised the potential to exploit *Lolita*, as discussed below). They also packaged their pictures around their own



growing, maverick status as demonstrated in publicity material they put out about themselves (see figure 2).

HKPC diversified successfully between 1955 and 1962. They began with a film, *The Killing*, which conformed to the low-budget requirements of United Artists. The picture was made on a small-scale, similar to the way Kubrick had operated on his earliest features, before HKPC expanded their ambition to collaborate and affiliate with other independent producers, including Kirk Douglas and Marlon Brando (see Chapter Three). By the early 1960s, they were no longer a regionally based production outfit, but rather operated an international mode of production, with companies based (for tax purposes) in Switzerland and filming in the United Kingdom. The company had loaned out its director to work on an historical epic with a multi-million dollar budget that garnered extraordinary success. They expanded their affiliations to major independents like Seven Arts and even contracted an up-and-coming actress to their payroll, Sue Lyon. Most importantly, and perhaps purposely, they courted innovation and controversy, pursuing subject matter that gained them attention in the media. HKPC used publicity to their advantage, placing an advert (against the wishes of UA) in *Variety* on 21 March 1956 that headlined them as ‘The New UA Team’ (Anon. 1956a) (see Figure 2). As LoBrutto has argued, such methods employed by HKPC demonstrated that the company was, ‘for their time [...] innovative rogues – an independent company long before Cannon, Carolco, New Line, or Miramax’ (1997: 133).

### ***Lolita* and the Diversification of the Harris-Kubrick Pictures Corporation**

If HKPC had blurred the boundaries of art cinema and exploitation with *The Killing*, there was a similar approach to the more prestigious *Lolita*. This next section looks at how HKPC’s abilities to diversify their production output, respond to industrial contexts – such as the internationalisation of Hollywood – and exploit weaknesses in the Production Code allowed them to produce *Lolita*.

Following the release of *The Killing*, and perhaps sensing the need to expand beyond low-budget exploitation, HKPC began looking to adapt books of a more literary persuasion. These included Stefan Zweig’s *The Burning Secret* (1911), Calder Willingham’s *Natural Child*, and Vladimir Nabokov’s *Laughter in the Dark* (1938)

(Ulivieri 2017). This material often contained elements of sex and violence, but within the acceptable confines of literary work. HKPC had acquired the rights to Nabokov's *Lolita* (1955) in September 1958 for \$150,000 (Anon. 1959a: 17). This greatly excited Harris and United Artists were initially interested in financing and distributing the picture (Anon. 1958a: 2). The book had gained a notorious reputation given its scandalous narrative of hebephilia, summed up sardonically in *Variety* as being about,

A man who has a passion for “nymphets” – meaning girls from 10 to 14. The male marries a woman for the purpose of being with her daughter of the “nymphet” age. The woman dies and he carries on with the girl. (Anon. 1958a: 2)

Harris wrote to Kubrick in October 1959 to detail his enthusiasm at the business potential of their newly acquired property. Gregory Ratoff, the Russian born film producer and actor, told Harris that '*Lolita* is the greatest property in existence' and predicted that it would return a substantial profit for HKPC (Harris 1959a). Harris felt that the reputation of HKPC outside of the USA would play to their advantage in adapting a novel like *Lolita*: 'It's my guess that Paris, London and Rome are the places to be. We have big reputations and films seem to mean more over there' (Harris 1959a). Harris concluded his letter to Kubrick by telling him that Seven Arts's Kenneth Hyman was 'producing a film with Brigitte Bardot and claims to be able to get her for another. I'll bet there are many other European starlets that we could find if we were there. Try and get to these cities while you're in Europe' (Harris 1959a). Harris seemed to be attempting to persuade Kubrick of a European move with the allure of the likes of Bardot. The film was eventually shot in the UK, lured by the so-called Eady Levy, a government subsidy paid out by the British Film Fund Agency to productions that suitably qualified as British (Fenwick 2017a: 192-193). In order to qualify, producers needed to ensure the film was produced in a British territory and 'at least 75 percent of labor costs to have been paid to British persons' (192). The criteria to qualify as a British production impacted not only on *Lolita* (filming in the UK and casting British actors in the lead roles), but also on all of Kubrick's subsequent pictures that took advantage of the Eady Levy (up to *The Shining*, after which the Eady Levy was disbanded by Margaret Thatcher's government in 1985 (Fenwick 2017: 198)). The impact on *Lolita* was also aesthetic, with the second half of the film (essentially a road

movie) losing the ‘authenticity of the American highway locale of Nabokov’s novel and instead gave the film a decidedly cozy, British feel’ (196).

Harris still faced several hurdles in his attempts to package *Lolita* and obtain financial backing. This included the lack of an actor for the lead role of Humbert Humbert (who had to be British for the film to be eligible for the Eady Levy), the transgressive reputation of the novel, and Kubrick’s growing insistence on creative control. Harris had come close to finalising a deal with Warner Bros., which would have seen the company finance the project for \$1 million and entitled HKPC to fifty per cent of any profits. But the deal was turned down on the basis that ‘Harris-Kubrick refused to allow WB any say-so in story treatment, which latter demanded’ (Anon. 1959c: 17). Kubrick was causing, in *Variety*’s words, ‘hassle over “artistic control”’ (17). The trade press also reported that another, unnamed film company ‘flatly refused to finance “Lolita” when [HKPC] [...] allegedly demanded “impossible” terms, including “no look” at the screenplay’ (Anon. 1959d: 4). This could have been United Artists, which had expressed an interest in funding the development of a screenplay, but eventually decided against this. UA’s Robert Blumofe explained the reasoning as being because of HKPC making ‘one of the most presumptuous and arrogant demands for a deal that we have ever had, particularly when it comes from a couple of youngsters like these’ (Blumofe 1959 cited in Balio 1987: 159).

Harris continued his pursuit of a financial backer who would allow HKPC creative freedom on the script, a script that was to be based on controversial literary material and thereby was sure to encounter trouble with the MPAA and the Legion of Decency. He found this almost impossible, and perhaps sensing the difficulties ahead and potential development hell, was simultaneously acquiring other literary property and registering other titles for HKPC. Just as the major companies were wary of financing *Lolita*, major Hollywood stars were wary of appearing in any adaptation of the scandalous novel. Its taboo subject matter put off a number of star names that did not want to be associated with themes of transgressive love. Laurence Olivier had been approached while Kubrick worked with him on *Spartacus* and he provisionally agreed to play Humbert in 1959 (Tennant 1959). But less than a month after indicating his commitment, Olivier wrote to Harris and Kubrick to backtrack after realising the tarnish on his appearance playing Humbert might have:

[I do] not feel my mind grasping a film conception of the subject, and I therefore don't feel that I can very well bear the onus of the responsibility of partnership in the script of a subject concerning which strong doubts are so uppermost in my mind [...] I fear that told in terms of dialogue the subject would be reduced to the level of pornography, to which I am afraid quite a few people already consign it. (Olivier 1959)

Certainly the book had a pornographic reputation, as Olivier suggests. The Paris based Olympia Press had originally published it after it failed to find mainstream publication. Olympia had a list of erotic titles to its name, including *The 120 Days of Sodom, or the School of Libertinage* (Marquis de Sade 1904) and *The Carnal Days of Helen Seferis* (Alexander Trocchi 1954).<sup>14</sup> Such association in the conservative days of the 1950s preceded the book and, therefore, by implication the film HKPC was attempting to produce. Harris has said that, 'I'm sure MCA talked him out of it, that Sir Laurence Olivier can't walk into a project like this with these two kids and, God knows what they're going to do [...] you're Laurence Olivier, you can't run the risk of telling the story of a paedophile' (Appendix I). Harris would approach David Niven to be cast as Humbert, but was told that he was already committed to a television programme with Four Star Television and that the sponsors of Niven and the show would withdraw their sponsorship should he do the film (Appendix I). Association with the subject material was causing jitters in the industry.

If Hollywood both courted the controversy that surrounded the project, but simultaneously fought it, then Harris would have to look beyond the borders of Hollywood, beyond those of the American film industry, and seek other modes of finance and other ways of producing. By mid-1959 the book had 'disproportionately high' sales in Europe, particularly Germany and France (Harris 1959a), with Harris concluding that this would mean 'a comparable ready-made audience in those countries' (1959a). In order to raise funds to finance the film, Harris considered preselling it to European countries based on the hype (Appendix I). He was once more displaying his ability to subvert the Hollywood system. Harris outlined his thinking in a letter to Kubrick, saying that the publishing world was 'buzzing' due to the anticipated success

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<sup>14</sup> Olympia Press's reputation is perhaps more fairly assessed as being bohemian. Alongside the erotic titles, Olympia also published titles by Beat Generation poets and writers like Allen Ginsberg and Jack Kerouac (Campbell 2016). For further reading on Olympia Press see Carroll and Kearney's *The Paris Olympia Press* (2007).

of the republication of *Lolita* in Europe (Harris 1959b). This was shaping up not to be an American film, but an international project. Packaging the project to have a script with Nabokov's name on it (even if Harris and Kubrick rewrote his script), as well as eventually snaring an A-list British star, James Mason, would increase the commercial viability of the project and convince distributors in Europe of the audience potential before the film had even been produced. Harris concluded that, 'not only will we have multiple millions exposed to the book all over again but can work out a separate movie edition when the picture is released' (Harris 1959b).

However, the need to pre-sell the picture became less urgent due to a serendipitous meeting between Harris and his old schoolmate, Kenneth Hyman. Hyman was preparing to relocate to London after being appointed the Head of UK Operations for his father's (Eliot) production company, Seven Arts (Anon. 1960a: 15). By 1959 Seven Arts had grown vastly and had begun developing subsidiary interests in other entertainment media, including the record industry, Broadway plays, and the development of leisure resorts in the Bahamas (Anon. 1960a: 1). As Seven Arts enacted on its diversification strategy, its main company officers, Eliot Hyman and Lou Chesler, pursued a business strategy of creating a 'family' of producers to create a constant stream of packaged feature productions (1). They offered 'stock inducements to top rated actors and directors to become members' of this family, with the added enticement of not just having their pictures financed but also participating 'in the overall success of the company and not merely in individual pictures' (1). The mode of production being developed by Seven Arts expanded on the successful formula of the package-unit system pioneered by United Artists throughout the 1950s. Seven Arts offered producers either complete financing, partial financing, or arranging financing through a distributor. By September 1960, Seven Arts had approximately fifteen pictures in production and had contributed \$17,500,000 to their financing (Anon. 1960a: 15). Films such as *The Misfits* (1961), *West Side Story* (1961), *By Love Possessed* (1961), and *Two for the Seesaw* (1962) were financed by Seven Arts and distributed by UA (Anon. 1960a: 15). In the case of *The Misfits*, Seven Arts were the sole production company, while the latter three films were produced in association with the Mirisch Company (15). The Mirisch Company affiliated with UA in 1957, agreeing a twelve-picture contract with the distributor (Anon. 1964d: 6). Just as Mirisch were diversifying going

into the 1960s (they expanded their deal with UA in 1964 to produce forty-eight pictures over ten years, 'dependent on business conditions' with the policy being 'flexible' (6)), so did Seven Arts. They participated in international productions, including eighteen pictures for Hammer Films (Anon. 1960a: 15). They also co-produced a number of productions such as *The Roman Spring of Mrs Stone* (1961) and *The Sergeant* (1968), as well as participated in productions that it originally owned the films rights to, including *Anatomy of a Murder* (1959) and *Strangers When We Meet* (1960) (Anon. 1960a: 15). HKPC was included in the Seven Arts 'family' as part of Hyman's diversification strategy and *Lolita* (15), their first picture together, would be a fifty-fifty partnership (Appendix I). Seven Arts's 'principal function was the assembly and development of packages. The actual physical production [is] turned over to selected producers' (Anon. 1960a: 15), in this case, HKPC.

With Seven Arts financing and packaging the film, Harris and Kubrick could turn their attention to the adaptation itself. The absolute creative freedom on the script that Kubrick desired would prove impossible during the days of the Production Code, despite his brazen confidence when discussing the issue of censorship with potential stars of the picture, such as a letter he wrote to Peter Ustinov on 20 May 1960, claiming, 'the censorship thing does not concern me very much [...] I don't think the MPAA will give us a seal, but if you've been following the grosses of similar films, it doesn't make a difference' (Kubrick 1960a). His confidence on the censorship issue was twofold: one, Harris and Seven Arts intended to road show *Lolita* for the first year of its release, and two, the film itself would be 'fairly innocent as far as [...] the eye will see', leading Kubrick to conclude that 'the MPAA thing becomes merely academic' (Kubrick 1960a). Films that had previously been released without a seal had gone on to be big hits at the box office, including two films by Otto Preminger, *The Moon is Blue* (1953) and *Man With the Golden Arm* (1955), and Elia Kazan's *Baby Doll* (1956); the Legion of Decency condemned them all. Seven Arts, however, were not to take any risks, particularly when it came to the script. Kubrick's comment that the film was to be innocent as far as 'the eye will see' betrayed his method of inserting sexual innuendo via the spoken word, as would become evident in the final film. The dialogue was filled with sexual innuendo, from Humbert being persuaded to rent Charlotte Haze's home because of *Lolita*'s "cherry pies" and John and Jean being "broadminded" and "doing

homework” together, to Charlotte showing Clare Quilty her “garden” and Lolita going to have a “cavity filled” by Uncle Ivor. Harris and Kubrick wrote the final screenplay based on their own ideas and the drafts prepared by Calder Willingham, Nabokov, and Nabokov’s original book, though they departed quite substantially from the source text (Pinkerton 2015).

Seven Arts wanted to ensure protection in passing the project by the censors and so brought on board a ‘script technical adviser’, Martin Quigley, who had co-authored the Motion Picture Production Code in 1930. As Harris has commented, ‘we figured if we could get him on our film as a technical adviser, he could keep us out of trouble’ (Appendix I). Quigley would eventually lead negotiations with Geoffrey Sherlock, the head of the MPAA, about any necessary cuts to the completed picture (Harris 2016). Harris and Kubrick did not participate in these negotiations given Quigley’s intimate relationship with the Production Code. Quigley found a number of problems in the script prepared by Harris and Kubrick and all of the changes he recommended to the first eighty-two pages were incorporated by the start of the shoot on 28 November 1960 (Hyman 1960a). Further problems were identified in the final eighty-three pages of the script, but due to shooting having commenced and it being impractical for either Harris or Kubrick to meet with Quigley to discuss them – they were both in the UK – Hyman requested that they ‘avoid any shooting of what would be included in these last eighty-three pages, until such time as this has been settled’ (Hyman 1960a). Hyman asked that Harris inform him of any scenes that were scheduled to be imminently shot from the last eighty-three pages so Quigley could be informed and see if he had any issues with them. Kubrick would no doubt have found Hyman’s interventions frustrating, given his documented desire for a deal where financiers could not have access to the script (Anon. 1959d: 4). Hyman’s requests amounted, in a sense, to legal control over what kind of material Harris and Kubrick could film on the instruction of Quigley. In a letter of 28 November to the pair, Hyman asked them to fully recognise Quigley’s suggestions and thinking, because he felt there was increasing societal demand for the ‘elimination of subject matter onerous to the public at large’ and that failure to cooperate with Quigley would lead to a ‘most unhappy situation’ (Hyman 1960a).

Hyman’s letter ends with a veiled acknowledgement that, should HKPC not have complied with Quigley’s recommendations, then ‘we would have come to the

point of no return' (Hyman 1960a). In fact, the extent of Hyman's interventions is remarkable. For instance, he essentially orders Harris and Kubrick to 'incorporate immediately into the screenplay those changes reflected in the 82 pages in order that they can be passed onto Mr Quigley without delay', and that it would be absolutely necessary for further revisions to the screenplay (Hyman 1960a). Hyman was protecting not only the film from any protracted battles with the censors, but also the reputation of Seven Arts, a company that was rapidly expanding and would certainly not want its reputation sullied by an unchecked Harris and Kubrick. If *Lolita* faced a battle with the MPAA and Legion of Decency, it in effect was finding itself being censored by its financial backers, Seven Arts. Hence Kubrick's turn to the use of innuendo, almost as a subversive way of rebelling against the lack of creative authority he now found himself with on the screenplay.

It would seem that Quigley had a direct line to Hyman, bypassing James B. Harris. As Harris said, he was absent from issues of censorship, seemingly stripped of the power to control this by Seven Arts, who invested Quigley with an element of censored authorial agency. In a letter from Quigley to Hyman on 7 December, he tells the head of Seven Arts Productions that an article in *Variety*, in which a pastor attacks *Lolita*, is another 'current indication of the fury and extent of the attack which well may be expected. I hope we will be in a position to meet the attack with the only kind of defense [sic] that can be effective' (Quigley 1960). It is left undetermined in the letter precisely what Quigley means by the only effective kind of defence, though presumably this includes the need for HKPC to fully comply with Quigley's recommendations. Hyman forwarded both the letter and the *Variety* article from Quigley to Harris and Kubrick five days later, noting that it is important that everyone understands 'the good taste in which the picture is made' (Hyman 1960b).

The underlying tension over the film's obvious taboo subject was soon exploited by HKPC, however, as Harris commenced work on developing promotion of Sue Lyon and her 'Lolita image' (Harris 1960). Harris's intent was to introduce Lyon to the world through photographs, 'the shooting of which are completely controlled by Stanley and myself' (Harris 1960). This involved the need to ensure that she was not portrayed as being 'completely opposite in real life to the character' (Harris 1960). The aim was to project an image of what Harris called 'artistic integrity' through subtle promotion of



Lyon ahead of the film's screening with the censors (Harris 1960). Promotion of Lyon and the *Lolita*-image in *Life* magazine emphasised how the title role required her to convey 'both girlish innocence and far too much experience' (Bunzel 1962: 97). The image of Lyon that was presented to the media was of a confident woman, someone who was carefree and light-hearted who had 'clowned' her way through her audition for the role of Lolita (Bunzel 1962: 98). One staged photograph shows her riding a horse and confidently pointing off camera; Lyon was presented as a mature and self-assured young woman, possessing experience beyond her teenage years. Such images played up to the official film poster, showing *Lolita* provocatively sucking on a lollypop as her eyes peek suggestively over the brim of her heart-shaped sunglasses. A bold headline across the poster asks, 'how did they ever make a movie of Lolita?', and plays up the fact that the film was only 'for persons over 18 years of age' (Anon. 1962c: 19). Critical quotes on one version of the poster provocatively suggested that, 'Sue Lyon makes you believe that she is Lolita!' The *Lolita*-image HKPC were crafting was one of the tantalising prospect of sex, of seeing Sue Lyon/Lolita act out the book's most notorious passages, all the while playing on its pornographic association to Olympia Press. Kubrick himself acknowledged in a 1970 interview with Joseph Gelmis that the narrative interest of both the book and film 'boils down to the question, "Will Humbert get Lolita into bed?"' (Kubrick quoted in Phillips 2001: 88). The *Lolita*-image drew upon the exploitation aesthetics of sex and violence of the low-budget genre pictures that HKPC had started out production in as part of UA's abecedarian programme. But just as *The Killing* blurred the boundaries between exploitation and art film, the promotion of *Lolita* aimed towards such confused categorisation through the exploitation of Sue Lyon and the use of Nabokov's literary credentials in giving him the sole screenplay credit.

Reviews of the film pointed at how *Lolita* was both macabre, given its opening murder scene and the blackly humorous portrayal of Charlotte's accidental death, as well as both 'complex and demanding', being based on a first-rate book (Anon. 1962c: 19). Other reviews argued that the intellectual themes are juxtaposed against the occasional 'sexy tableau', such as the opening shots of Humbert sensually painting Lolita's toe nails (Anon. 1962d: 137). Elsewhere, James Mason's performance is described as seedy (137), Sue Lyon's Lolita is described as having transformed the

character into a ‘busty bobbysoxer of independence’ (Anby 1962: 6), and Sellers’s impersonation of a German psychiatrist as being in ‘almost Dostoievskian territory of sadistic innuendo and crafty, leechlike persistence’ (Anon. 1962d: 137). This tension between the literary prestige of the adaptation, with the baser more exploitative elements of noir, innuendo, and death no doubt flummoxed some reviewers. *Sight and Sound*’s Arlene Croce effused over Nabokov’s screenplay, saying it was ‘a model of adaptation – resourceful, economical, light-bodied’, in contrast to what she saw as Kubrick’s poor direction (Croce 1962: 191). She insisted the film suffered due to having the genius of Nabokov’s voice and ear melded with Kubrick’s ‘weird’ direction, what she called ‘a cross between Josef von Sternberg and Preston Sturges’ (191); in other words the intelligent wit and dry humour of Sturges’s comedies, mixed with the ‘trashy pornography’ of Sternberg’s work such as *The Blue Angel/Der blaue Engel* (1930) (Gallagher 2002). Both film directors presented dark visions of men, with the humour of Sturges’ films stemming from ‘a bitter, pessimistic view of the world and an idea of man as grossly imperfect’ (Varsted Kirkegaard 2004), while von Sternberg’s films depict the self-destruction of male characters due to their ‘mixtures of sadism and masochistic subservience’ to women (Gallagher 2002).

This is not to suggest that *Lolita* was any kind of highbrow sexploitation picture, despite the attempts to exploit the ‘adult’ nature of the story. The insinuation of an ‘adults only’ movie became a key part of TV-spots for the film and led one NBC affiliate to refuse to show the advert, even though it had been deemed acceptable by both NBC executives and censors (Anon. 1962e: 48). Instead, *Lolita* saw HKPC diversifying their product brand, drawing on the various aesthetic associations to sexploitation and pornography, while at the same time moving toward a European art house complexity, developing a story with psychological depth and auteur credentials. This is a process that Elena Gorfinkel calls cultural distinction, of the merging of sexual and cinephile taste, bringing art house legitimacy to sexual representations on screen, increasingly seen in European movies such as *The Fourth Sex* (1961), *The Twilight Girls* (1957) and *The Libertine* (1969) (Gorfinkel 2002: 26-27). These pictures expanded the ‘sphere of acceptable consumption in a period of re-stratifying public taste’ (39). In the immediate wake of *Lolita*’s release, low-budget sexploitation films were released, such as *The Seducers* (1962), with narratives of older men seducing the

younger daughters of their fiancés or friends.

By the end of 1963, *Lolita* had taken \$4.5 million in domestic rentals, placing it in *Variety*'s 'All-Time Top Grossers' list (Anon. 1964e: 69). The film's success demonstrated the growth of HKPC and how their strategy to internationalise their productions and to take advantage of the blurring of transgressive topics and art house aesthetics had created a product of cultural distinction that resonated with audiences.

## Conclusion

This chapter has considered how HKPC fits within the industrial transformations taking place in Hollywood in the 1950s and early 1960s, contributing to the literature on these contexts. Robert Sklar first raised the question of how Kubrick and his films were 'enmeshed in the structures of the American film business' (1988: 114). He suggested that Kubrick 'hardly ever hesitated from playing the American film business game' (114), and as a result his own filmmaking strategies were 'inevitably inflected by the constraints of American film industry practices' (115). Peter Krämer (2013a; 2015a; 2017a) and Tino Balio (1985; 1987) have further uncovered these contexts, particularly around the need for diversification in independent filmmaking due to a growing internationalisation of Hollywood and its productions. This chapter has argued that, through a process of diversification, the company was able to grow and thrive, particularly off of this rapid internationalisation of Hollywood, as well as the ability to exploit controversy and the weaknesses of the Production Code. As production output decreased in the 1950s and budgets increased, and as the package-unit system was solidified as the new mode of production, HKPC responded to the business strategies of companies such as United Artists and Seven Arts to their advantage. Following its takeover by Krim and Benjamin, UA pursued a policy of investing in new and innovative producing talent. Kubrick's precocious methods in the early 1950s and HKPC's ability to align their production package with UA's abecedarian programme ensured they were able to secure a funding deal, as well as gain a semblance of artistic independence in how they adapted Lionel White's *Clean Break*. Similarly, by responding to industrial trends to move productions abroad, as well as blurring the lines between art and exploitation, they were able to realise an adaptation of *Lolita* (if somewhat hampered by the constraints of the Production Code).

Notwithstanding its initial failure at the box office, *The Killing* performed a much more important function for HKPC than a return on investment: it had attracted the attention of critics and Hollywood insiders. On 30 June 1956, HKPC were included in a special producer's issue of *The Independent Film Journal*. It outlined Hollywood's hottest producing companies and HKPC, after just one feature, were included, being described as the industry's 'most versatile young talents' (Anon. 1956c: 47). Harris was vital in the development of HKPC and Kubrick's own career; his innovations, both at Flamingo Films as a pioneer of the distribution of films to television, and at HKPC in his ability to secure international deals for the company, demonstrate his significance in the development of the role of producer itself. Control was an issue key to HKPC from the outset, and throughout its activity, Harris battled – along with Kubrick – to refashion the responsibilities of the role and to wrestle these back from financiers, studios, and other corporate entities. The neglect of Harris's contribution, or the way in which HKPC operated, has resulted in Kubrick's early career being positioned within the auteurist contexts of his later films. But the production of these films was a constant struggle, a power battle that inevitably saw compromise, as well as business decisions tailored to meet the strategies of companies such as UA.

What this chapter also reveals is the lack of control in one key area of producing: the promotion, publicity and distribution of their films. HKPC lacked any control over *The Killing* once the print had been handed over to United Artists, resulting in poor grosses for the picture during its initial release. Though they were able to control the promotion (and exploitation) of Sue Lyon's *Lolita*-image, HKPC had to defer to both Seven Arts and MGM over the wider promotion and distribution of that picture. HKPC had attempted to appoint their own publicist to *Lolita*, Kubrick's friend Sig Shore, but Hyman made clear he was not happy with HKPC selecting their own publicist and forced them to drop him (Kubrick 1961). But even though HKPC agreed to the dropping of Shore they argued strenuously with Seven Arts about how *Lolita* should be promoted. Hyman wanted to forfeit HKPC's rights of 'publicity and advertising approvals and suggestions' (Kubrick 1961), but Kubrick saw this policy as counterintuitive to the filmmaking process. For him, being an independent producer relying on the money of others also meant having absolute control and legal authority. His view was based on the belief that the producer of the film had an investment that

was not merely financial, but also creative; the film was being made out of a passion for the story, and he did trust a corporate entity to take over the responsibilities of the picture at the last stage. Kubrick was explicit in this belief, telling Hyman ‘Jim and I simply cannot believe that you have so much faith in the wisdom [...] of any of the major studio sales departments that you would be willing to entrust them entirely to do the best possible job [...] Seven Arts and ourselves would be asking for the most gratuitous chances of things being messed up’ (Kubrick 1961).

What this chapter demonstrates is the tension between independent producers and the desire by the major Hollywood companies to retain legal authority of the productions, particularly over publicity and distribution. As the next chapter discusses, the market and industrial trends outlined in this chapter were presenting Hollywood with greater financial risk heading into the 1960s and therefore the role of the producer and the power they had become an ever more important issue.

## Chapter Three:

### **‘If you don’t have legal authority, you don’t have any authority at all’: New Modes of Producing in Hollywood 1957-1960**

The management and working style of HKPC was established in the previous chapter, both their means of independent production and their relation to wider contexts of the package-unit system. The company embodied the kind of fresh blood that the industry needed to revitalise its flagging fortunes in the face of audience decline and the rise of television (Finler 2003: 377-379). They were the ‘injection of independent into the mainstream’ that David O. Selznick had been calling for – the ‘young blood and young thinking’ that was a ‘pre-requisite if the picture business is to survive’ (Anon. 1950c: 63). Faced with a declining audience increasingly enamoured with television, producers who could package films that were innovative and low-budget stood to benefit. As Peter Lev has suggested, the independent producer had become the ‘creative center of the film industry [...] the victory of the independents was clear’ (2003: 2). This also suggests that the location of power and authority within the film industry was shifting, with independent producers building their own powerbases. One such former studio boss who understood the paradigm shift in the industry was Darryl F. Zanuck, an executive at Twentieth Century-Fox. Zanuck quit his role in 1956 to become an independent producer and later reflected on this decision: ‘The head of the studio was no longer in charge; he was becoming “a negotiator, an executive, a peacemaker”’ (Lev 2003: 2).

Yet the balance of power was still in the favour of the major studios. Though independent producers could find themselves earning more than studio executives, companies like Fox, Paramount, and MGM, were still very much in control of the product the producers were making due to being the distributors and promoters of the films (2). The power struggle over the next decade would see independent producers such as Kubrick battling for control over ‘legal authority’, in other words, to become the absolute executive of a film, with studios merely providing a service such as global distribution. What was happening in Hollywood throughout the 1950s and 1960s was a

realignment of power amongst the industry's personnel, with a number of individuals taking advantage of these circumstances.

One of these was Kirk Douglas. Among the most powerful individuals in Hollywood in the 1950s, his box office appeal in films like *The Bad and the Beautiful* (1952) and *20,000 Leagues Under the Sea* (1954), and *Man Without A Star* (1955) led him to set up his own production company, Bryna Productions, in 1955. Bryna and HKPC were two independent production companies that operated in a similar fashion to some degree, both headed by producers in control of their own films and then selling them to Hollywood majors for distribution. It was not long before these two increasingly influential production companies came together to collaborate. Douglas had been impressed with *The Killing* (Douglas 1988: 273), while HKPC were looking for backing and star power in order to package an adaptation of Humphrey Cobb's novel *Paths of Glory* (1935).

This chapter will trace the interactions of these two companies between 1956 and 1961, focusing on the issue of control and the new modes of producing in mainstream Hollywood. Case studies of *Paths of Glory* and *Spartacus* reveal that this period would lead to some important realisations for Kubrick about control and, particularly, the publicity units on films, all of which would greatly influence him in the founding of his own production companies in 1962. The first section of this chapter explores the power shift in Hollywood to the independent producer operating in the mainstream, before moving on to look at the contractual contexts between Bryna and HKPC. The chapter will situate the productions of *Paths of Glory* and *Spartacus* within the framework of these new modes of producing and the shifting power balance in Hollywood, and assess its impact on Kubrick's later refashioning of the role of producer.

### **New Modes of Producing**

To better understand the new modes of producing and the shifting power dynamics in Hollywood, it is necessary to look at the wider contexts of producing and production companies by the end of the 1950s. By 1957, in the short space of a decade, the industrial conditions of Hollywood had altered radically and the package-unit system was now dominant. Whereas the major studios once controlled actors, some now

operated as producers with their own production companies. The most successful in terms of box office had been Hecht-Hill-Lancaster Productions, the production company of actor Burt Lancaster and his two business partners, James Hill and Harold Hecht. Lancaster had originally formed his independent production company, Norma Productions, along with Hecht in 1948, when it was 'one of the first independent film producing companies in Hollywood [...] in an era in which studios still dominated Hollywood' (Fein 1985). Norma Productions produced three films, *Kiss the Blood Off My Hands* (1948) produced by Richard Vernon and distributed by Universal, *The Flame and the Arrow* (1950) distributed by Warner Bros., and *Ten Tall Men* (1951) distributed by Columbia Pictures, with all of them proving successful at the box office and demonstrating the financial gain that independent production companies could bring to their executives.

Lancaster and Hecht incorporated a new production company in 1951, Hecht-Lancaster, and signed a multi-deal contract with United Artists. The deal saw UA agree to fully finance the company's projects, allow them to keep seventy-five per cent of any profits, and be given a special distribution fee discount of twenty-five per cent (Balio 1987: 74). Hecht-Lancaster Productions made five pictures as part of the arrangement: *The Crimson Pirate* (1952), *Apache*, *Vera Cruz*, *Marty* (1955), and *The Kentuckian* (1955). Again each of these films was highly profitable, made on relatively small budgets but often returning sizeable profits. *Apache* had cost approximately \$1 million but took \$3 million domestically, while *Vera Cruz* took \$3.5 million domestically off a budget of \$1.6 million (Balio 1987: 79). The box office accomplishment of Hecht-Lancaster Productions was the most prominent example of a new way of producing in Hollywood. No longer did major studios hold the power, but rather independent companies broke the established industrial order, leading to the rapid demise of the old studio system. In turn, 'they were able to tackle more daring subjects, delving into areas that Hollywood had previously shied away from' (Bergan 2001).

HKPC was set up in a similar fashion as Hecht-Lancaster. The aim of these production companies was not to become so successful as to achieve permanent affiliation, or merge with a particular studio (though some did), but rather to build a powerbase from which flowed legal authority. In effect, they took over the role of the classical Hollywood moguls, the Thalbergs, Warners, and Zanucks who decided what



films would be shot, how they would be filmed, and who would star in them. The one area where control largely remained with the majors, however, was publicity; if they were to be distributing the picture, then they were to control how it was sold.

Kirk Douglas at Bryna Productions would exemplify the image of the new producer. Douglas recognised the potential of Hecht-Lancaster and their operation of the package-unit method and was spurred on to form his own independent production company. Douglas was motivated by the resounding critical and commercial success of films like *Marty*, but also by the fifty per cent participation deal he had reached with Universal on *Man Without A Star* (1955) (Douglas 1988: 256). The arrangement saw Douglas accrue over \$360,000 in payments by May 1957 (Brown 1957). It was following the release of *Man Without A Star* that Douglas formed Bryna Productions. *Life* magazine ran a piece on Douglas describing his new company:

They will find him [Douglas] entering an unpretentious office building at 9 a.m. and riding a self-service elevator to an efficiently staffed suite of rooms where he spends all day every day running his Bryna Productions. Douglas is still a little self-conscious about his new role. In the early days of Bryna the trade paper *Variety* ran a headline which called him an actor-tycoon [...] He scorns a conventional desk and prefers to do most of his work lying full length on a couch. But there he devotes the most serious study to film ideas, treatments, scripts, casts and budgets. (Havemann 1958: 185)

Douglas's professed motivations behind the formation of Bryna were not to become a 'tycoon', but to gain greater legal authority over the way his films were made (Douglas 1988: 257). Yet despite his studious management of Bryna, Douglas found his initial years in independent production a struggle. Bryna's first feature, *The Indian Fighter*, was a success at the box office, but the company's next four features all took a heavy loss: *Spring Reunion* (1957), *Lizzie* (1957), *The Careless Years* (1957), and *Ride Out For Revenge* (1957). Something might be said of the fact that Douglas had approved of a quick succession of movies in the space of a year, not allowing for quality but rather quantity. This contrasted with how Hecht-Lancaster operated and certainly with how HKPC would operate. Largely this had been on the advice of Douglas's lawyer, Sam Norton, who advised him that Bryna, for tax purposes, had to produce a number of films that did not feature Douglas in a starring role. As a result, Douglas 'reluctantly set up several low-budget pictures' (Douglas 1988: 262). Independent production was predicated not on spectacle or big budget, but rather on smaller budgets, quality production, and big name stars. Hecht-Lancaster's *Marty* had proven this, as would

*Paths of Glory* to some extent, though the latter's downbeat ending and anti-war themes may well have impacted on its broader appeal. However, Bryna found itself with several highly profitable features in the subsequent years, including *The Vikings* (1958) and *Spartacus*, a film that grossed more than \$60 million and became Universal's highest grossing film until *Airport* (1970).

These disparate production companies exemplified in their own way the changing state of Hollywood and the uncertainty and unpredictability of the industry. Independent production did not automatically equate to being your own independent producer in absolute legal control of your films. Nor did being an independent producer mean you could produce absolutely any feature without suffering the consequences of the whims of the box office. There were still industrial constraints and trends that impacted how films were produced and the degree of control producers were allowed, as will be explored in the following two sections.

### **Levels of Autonomy on *Paths of Glory***

The critical success of *The Killing* made it a calling card for HKPC and attracted the attention of the major distributors (Appendix I). *Time* magazine profiled HKPC, where once more the phrase 'boy wonders' was used to depict Harris and Kubrick, and described the way they produced *The Killing* as showing 'more audacity with dialogue and camera than Hollywood has seen since the obstreperous Orson Welles' (Anon. 1956m). The article enthused about HKPC's ability to produce an innovative and quality film on a relatively low-budget. MGM's Head of Production, Dore Schary, offered HKPC a deal to produce their next film, but told them explicitly that it could not be an adaptation of *Paths of Glory* (LoBrutto 1997: 130-131); MGM's previous anti-war film, *The Red Badge of Courage* (1951) directed by John Huston, had failed spectacularly at the box office, with a loss of over \$1 million (Miller n.d.). HKPC had bought the rights to Humphrey Cobb's *Paths of Glory* as one of several potential projects by the end of July 1956 (Appendix I). But instead, the deal with MGM saw them working on an adaptation of Stefan Zweig's *The Burning Secret* (1911), a story of an extra-marital affair (Anon. 1956h: 5).

MGM were undergoing 'management turmoil between 1955 and 1959, with the board of directors constantly fighting over who would control the company and what

direction it would take' (Lev 2003: 198). Therefore, it seems unlikely that HKPC would produce a film with MGM on the terms they wanted.<sup>15</sup> MGM had suffered losses in the fourth-quarter of 1955 and the first quarter of 1956. Dore Schary was thereby seeking ways to 'bolster the company's output' (Anon. 1956i: 7). But by mid-summer of 1956, MGM were looking to make efficiency savings and to 'reduce manpower in various departments' (7). MGM, along with Twentieth Century-Fox, had been one of the slowest of the majors to adapt and change in light of the 1948 Paramount Decrees, the rise of television, and the fast changing economic conditions of the film industry. By 1956 they finally acknowledged a need to reevaluate their operational procedures, with Schary concluding that 'in today's economy all studios "must examine (their) economy and stop waste"' (Anon. 1956j: 5). MGM began ending contracts with various personnel and hired an 'efficiency expert' (5). By November 1956, stockholders forced Schary out of the company, and further cuts were made. With Schary being paid-off, MGM used it as an opportunity to 'trim expenses' and remove from the payroll HKPC, whose development of *The Burning Secret* had overrun excessively and who had, behind MGM's back as it were, hired Jim Thompson to adapt *Paths of Glory* (Appendix I).

As Chapter Two showed, HKPC had begun a process of having a number of projects in development, arguably in preparation for the rejection of their ideas. Kubrick had already started exploring the possibility of adapting an Arthur Schnitzler project, a prospect that would gather momentum by the end of the 1950s when he came into contact with Schnitzler's grandson, Peter (Schnitzler 1959; see Chapter Six). HKPC also hired Calder Willingham to work on *The Burning Secret* (Appendix I). Willingham was a prolific author, who had written a bestseller by the age of twenty-five, *End As A Man* (1947). It was Kubrick who suggested approaching Willingham, having read several of his books and being impressed by his talent (Appendix I). However, the hiring of Willingham to adapt *The Burning Secret* may indicate HKPC's lack of passion for the project, and speak more to their desire to produce *Paths of Glory*. After all, Willingham's *End As A Man* was a controversial work that attacked the machismo culture of military life. Set in a Military Academy in the southern USA, the cadets are subjected to a 'rigid aristocratic discipline', overseen by the 'sadist, Jocko de Paris', a

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<sup>15</sup> See Chapter Two for further discussion about Kubrick's insistence on artistic control.

corporal known for his 'excessive brutality to his squad' (Isherwood 1951: 7). The book was noted for its realism and satiric humour, and its unflinching and critical view of US military life led to its being prosecuted, though the prosecution ultimately failed (7). Kubrick therefore probably viewed Willingham as the ideal writer to adapt *Paths of Glory* given its anti-war theme.

Without any studio backing, HKPC now had to pre-package *Paths of Glory* and attach a big name star to it. The completed script was sent to HKPC's agent, Ronnie Lubin, who in turn marketed it around various big-name stars in Hollywood, including Kirk Douglas (Appendix I). Harris and Kubrick met with Douglas at the Brown Derby restaurant in Beverly Hills (Harris 1957c: 1), along with Lubin and Douglas's agent Ray Stark, and made what Harris calls 'the most outrageous deal', agreed due to the anxiety to ensure Douglas would star in *Paths of Glory* (Appendix I). On 9 January 1957, a five-point memorandum of understanding was drawn up between Bryna Productions and HKPC (Bryna 1957). The memorandum set out a four-picture deal between the two companies, with an additional three pictures to be completed following *Paths of Glory*. Bryna Productions had no ownership of *Paths of Glory* as Kirk Douglas was an 'employee' of HKPC (Bryna 1957: 1). Despite Bryna having no ownership interest in *Paths of Glory*, it was still to be branded as a Bryna Productions film, Bryna's 'administrative and other facilities' were to be used, and publicity was to be out of the control of HKPC and given over to Public Relations Consultants Ltd (Bryna 1957: 1). The latter was a publicity company formed by Kirk Douglas and operated by Stan Margulies (Anon. 1959k). The primary function of Public Relations was to 'create, execute and supervise all publicity, exploitation and advertising on motion pictures produced by Bryna', to 'hire and supervise personnel needed', and to work with the 'publicity-advertising department of the distributing company' (Anon. 1959k). Despite the deal stressing that 'Harris and Kubrick are employers and may operate as individuals', with Douglas being an employee of HKPC on *Paths of Glory*, control of the publicity process was being taken out of their hands and given over to Bryna and Public Relations Consultants (Norton 1957b: 3).

The remaining contractually bound projects after *Paths of Glory* would see HKPC giving up much more control, effectively becoming employees of Bryna (Bryna 1957: 2). The memorandum of agreement and the affiliation between HKPC and Bryna

Productions were at the heart of Kubrick's battle for legal authority and control throughout the late 1950s and early 1960s. The memorandum set out that HKPC had to complete a second picture within fifteen months of the completion of *Paths of Glory*, with Bryna able to designate the project, and Harris and Kubrick having to write, produce and direct (Bryna 1957: 1). The financial terms of this project entitled HKPC to receive 'an amount equal to 15 percent of budget of picture not exceeding \$75,000' (1). This would suggest the production budget was set at a meagre \$500,000, half that of *Paths of Glory*. On top of this payment, HKPC were to receive a percentage of any profits, shared equally with Bryna (1). While the contractual agreements for the first two films were firm (*Paths of Glory* and a further picture to star Kirk Douglas (Harris 1957a: 18), Bryna could choose to exercise the option on the final two pictures 'three months after the completion of the second picture and both pictures to be made within eighteen months after the exercise of option' (Bryna 1957: 2). HKPC were to receive much smaller percentage fees on these option pictures, particularly on the final option where they would receive an amount 'equal to 10 percent of the budget [...] plus 10 percent of 100 percent of the net profits' (2).

HKPC had entered a contractual arrangement that would leave them without any legal producing authority or creative control following the completion of *Paths of Glory*. This was a heavy price to pay in order to secure Douglas in the lead role. Even though this was a non-exclusive contract, it effectively bound HKPC to Bryna for the foreseeable future, and, worse, allowed Bryna to participate in any creative property owned by HKPC (Bryna 1957: 3). They also had to 'keep Bryna advised of all commitments and pending negotiations' (2). Harris recalls that he felt the deal was utterly unfair, but that he and Kubrick were anxious to cast Douglas in *Paths of Glory* because having him as their star was a healthy financial and business investment (Appendix I). However, they immediately knew that they had to get out of the arrangement somehow: 'I mean, it's pretty much like a lifetime, I mean you did a picture every 18 months, it would take you about 8 years to be free of it' (Appendix I). Harris's estimation meant HKPC would not fulfil their obligations to Bryna until 1965 at the earliest.

Still, with Douglas attached to *Paths of Glory*, HKPC was successfully able to package the film to UA who agreed to finance the project for nearly \$1 million. UA

thereafter removed themselves from interference on the picture, only concerning themselves with publicity of the film (Appendix I). This was in line with UA's mode of operation in the 1950s, which saw it become one of the most successful companies in Hollywood. Key to the operation was four principles set out by Arthur B. Krim in a 1959 *Variety* article, 'The Company of the Independents'. First and foremost was 'autonomy for the independent producers who are made to feel, and who are treated – as what UA wants them to be – the owners of their negatives' (Hift 1959a: 13). Krim wanted to create an atmosphere of creativity for UA's producers 'to work autonomously once a project is agreed upon' (Anon. 1958b: 4). Underlying this was the company attitude that every picture had to be considered a failure from the start, 'then if it's a success, well, that means the hard work has paid off and we're agreeably surprised' (Hift 1959a: 13). Each picture and agreement with an independent producer was considered a risk, fitting with UA's claims of not taking undue risks, but rather 'measured risks' (13). Certainly, there was an inherent risk in UA's policy of granting autonomy and control to independent producers, particularly in terms of budget overspends. In a nod to the art-commerce dichotomy in a *Variety* article titled 'UA: Budgets, Art & Sanity', Krim claimed that independent producers that were financed or released through the company 'very rarely run seriously over budget' (Hift 1959b: 3). He outlined the reasons behind UA's policy of granting autonomy to producers:

You deal with a certain type of person when you deal with creative talent. If we were to start sharpening the pencil and trying for a climate of austerity, we would probably lose some of that talent. We would rather accept the extravaganzas that are part of showbusiness, but limit ourselves to dealing with people who have a reasonable chance of bringing in a big winner. (Hift 1959b: 3)

Krim's relaxed attitude was at odds with the usual way of conducting business in Hollywood. UA essentially absented themselves from a production and left it, and the supervision of the budget, in the hands of the producer, with the expectation that all budgets would go over by at least ten per cent for unforeseen circumstances (Hift 1959b: 3). More often than not, the idea of a totally out of control producer wildly spending UA's money was used for publicity, as was the case with Kirk Douglas' *The Vikings*:

The business of 'The Vikings' going way over was mostly publicity. The picture was originally budgeted at \$3,250,000 and it came in at \$3,400,000. However, Kirk Douglas thought it desirable to give out a higher figure. (Hift 1959b: 3)

UA's casual attitude to budget overspend was probably because they made their profits from film rentals and distribution fees (Balio 1987: 92). Producers stood to lose out if the production budget overspent and therefore it was their responsibility to ensure it didn't, with fiscal controls insuring that the producer 'lived up to his part of the bargain once shooting began' (93). UA's concern was in maximising film rentals and here we can see how the so-called autonomy given to producers was somewhat curtailed by the company's second principle, which subtly highlighted where the control and authority truly lay within the UA-independent producer dynamic. UA claimed that they provided 'maximum cooperation and collaboration in selling and promotion' of a film (Hift 1959a: 13), but made it very clear that they were 'strictly a motion picture *distribution* company [...] UA financed motion pictures simply to guarantee a steady supply of product' (Balio 1987: 89-90). The autonomy and control that Krim and UA liked to emphasise they provided for independent producers was not altogether the case, for the company retained 'ultimate discretionary power by exercising approval rights over the basic ingredients of a production' (93), alongside its control of the promotion and distribution of a film. Krim insisted that UA collaborated with the independent producer in the sales for a film, saying:

We try to be partners in sales with our producers. In the eight years that we have operated this company, I can say that we have not once booked a picture into a situation where the producer objected to terms. That's despite the fact that, under our contract, we do have a right to overrule the producer unless he comes up with a better booking. We believe in cooperation, both in sales and in advertising-publicity and we listen eagerly when the independent has ideas for campaigns to sell what, after all, is his picture. (Hift 1959a: 13)

The key phrase above is 'we try' – there is no absolute promise, despite Krim labelling the producer as 'hero' and insisting that, 'when we give a producer 100% autonomy, we mean exactly that – 100%' (13). The issue of autonomy in relation to publicity and distribution became the predominant battleground for Kubrick into the 1960s. Peter Krämer (2013b) has suggested that promotion and publicity had always been central to Kubrick, even since the early 1950s, and was what set him apart from other independent producers.

UA's unenthusiastic partnership in sales and promotion was evident on films such as *The Night of the Hunter*, produced by Paul Gregory. The film was Gregory's first production – he was originally a Broadway producer – and he contracted another novice, Charles Laughton, to direct it (*Night of the Hunter* would be Laughton's first and only director credit). Gregory believed that UA mishandled the film's promotion and distribution and gave priority instead to Stanley Kramer's *Not As A Stranger* (1955) (Anon. 1955j: 5). The film had double the negative cost of *The Night of the Hunter*'s \$700,000, and was receiving nearly \$1 million in advertising from UA (5). This equated to around \$50,000 being spent in Los Angeles alone, compared to the \$10,000 allocated to *The Night of the Hunter* (5). Gregory argued that such unequal treatment meant *The Night of the Hunter* was lost in the L.A. papers (5). cursory promotion of a film such as *The Night of the Hunter* was never going to help it given the unusual narrative and aesthetic of a film described as 'one of the most daring, eloquent and personal in style to have come from America in a long time' (Anon. 1956l: 3). Despite the critical praise, many were quick to point out that it was a 'weirdly macabre thriller [...] but the tension topples sadly, with too much arty, symbolic trickery' (Anon. 1955k: 16). Kubrick's films would be similarly unusual, from the downbeat, existential endings of *The Killing* and *Paths of Glory*, to a story of transgressive love between a college professor and a pre-pubescent girl in *Lolita*, and the absurdist comedy film about nuclear Armageddon in *Dr. Strangelove*.

*Paths of Glory*, which presented an utterly bleak and damning assessment of humanity and war, held obvious similarities to other relatively low-budget anti-war films such as *Attack* (1956), directed and produced by Robert Aldrich. Based on the play *Fragile Fox* (1954) by Norman Brooks, *Attack* was shot on location in California and the RKO backlot in just twenty-five days (Silver 2002). The film, financed and distributed by UA, tells the story of less-than-heroic American soldiers who order (or cancel) military attacks in World War Two based on the chances of advancing their career. *Attack* was controversial, with the United States military refusing to cooperate with the production because of the negative portrayal of the army. The French



government had a similar reaction to *Paths of Glory*, and did not appreciate the negative characterisation of the French military.<sup>16</sup>

The similarities between Aldrich's *Attack* and Kubrick's *Paths of Glory* extends to their aesthetics that emphasise their thematic concerns, with Aldrich's 'characteristic low light and side light cast[ing] long shadows on interior walls and floors and form rectangular blocks to give the frame a severe, constricting geometry which can symbolise the director's moral determinism' (Silver 2002). The overlap in thematic sensibility between Aldrich's *Attack* and Kubrick's *Paths of Glory* was in tune both with the existential intellectual philosophy that pervaded the 1950s, and with the directors' individual worldviews. Aldrich's films were imbued with an ideology of pessimism, cynicism, and,

idealism combined to create violent, angst-ridden outbursts of existential despair. Little wonder that such a thematic outlook should give Aldrich a cutting edge status with European observers. (Silver 2002)

This overriding thematic link of individuals attempting to survive in a indifferent and even hostile universe can be seen across a number of low-budget UA backed films such as *Attack*, *Paths of Glory*, *The Night of the Hunter*, and *The Man with the Golden Arm*. If HKPC's first feature, *The Killing*, was part of UA's abecedarian programme, their second feature was part of the company's 'Europeanised' programme, films that were inherent commercial risks but appealed to the liberal critical circle and drew heavily on the themes of European cinema. Such films, not always resounding successes at the box office given their niche appeal and bleak vision, would have appealed to the growing art-house audience. What Robert Ray termed the 'homogeneous mass audience' was disappearing, an audience that had been built on the values and ideology of the classical Hollywood and the American myth (Ray 1985: 138-139). Ray argues that classical Hollywood was built on the image of a self-sufficient America, an image that was left damaged in the post-war years, with the USA effectively 'Europeanised' by the 1950s due to global events:

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<sup>16</sup> The French Ministry of Interior said that *Paths of Glory* was 'subversive propaganda' that was 'highly offensive' to the French nation (Anon 1958i: 7). The film was not released in France until the mid-1970s.

By rejecting these movies, that group was saying, “that’s too infantile a form of what we believe.” By turning to the “serious” pictures, it was saying, “show us something more complicated.” This minority art-house crowd troubled Hollywood because it represented only one manifestation of the new widespread and growing audience awareness of alternative possibilities for the movies. (Ray 1985: 139)

Therefore, a section of Americans were responding to films with a more serious and at times pessimistic tone, which offered new visions of America, narrative, and cinema. The producing model pioneered by UA allowed for such films to reach the mainstream.

Regardless of the levels of creative autonomy on set, *Paths of Glory* saw an extensive three-way power struggle over its ad-campaign and publicity between HKPC, Bryna Productions and its Public Relations company, and United Artists. It was the director of Public Relations, Stan Margulies, who oversaw the liaison of publicity with UA, with assistance from Myer P. Beck. Both men, though, had a conflict of interest: their overriding need to report back to Kirk Douglas and to protect his and Bryna’s other ongoing productions. In theory, they sought authorisation from James B. Harris as the film’s producer. Public Relations appointed a unit publicity director to the production, Syd Stogel, against the wishes of Harris (Harris 1957d). Stogel’s duties were to comply with UA’s Publicity Manual and to ensure all necessary publicity material was obtained during production, including photographs, synopses, press releases, and cast and crew biographies (Harris 1957d). Stogel found himself confused by the hierarchical power structure of the production and sought clarity from Margulies as to whom he should report; on-set authority came from Harris, but Stogel also had to report to Margulies and Beck (Margulies 1957a). They in turn sent regular daily memos to give Stogel new tasks, such as telling him to gather and write ‘home town stories and art’ for the hired American Army personnel in minor roles (Margulies 1957a). Stogel still found that he had to stress that, given his freelance contract to specifically work on *Paths of Glory*, he was hesitant to attend to any of Kirk Douglas’s or Bryna’s other publicity needs (Stogel 1957). Increasingly, he found that Kirk Douglas’s time was being consumed by pre-publicity and promotion for *The Vikings*, which was due to commence shooting on 1 June, immediately after *Paths of Glory* (Stogel 1957). Harris was fully aware that Public Relations put the interests of Bryna and Kirk Douglas ahead of *Paths of Glory* and neglected to keep either him or Syd Stogel involved in ongoing matters (Harris 1957c). He detailed his concerns in a letter to Stan Margulies in March

1957, and suggested that Bryna and Public Relations may be in breach of their agreement with HKPC:

I get the feeling that you are not working for Harris-Kubrick Pictures and United Artists. Although for the purposes of the original agreement we are calling it a Bryna Production, you know this is not true and the function of your office is to service Harris-Kubrick and United Artists. What I am trying to say is that I am getting the feeling many times of being put on notice what is happening instead of being counselled with or asked for my opinion. I take exception to correspondence, copies of which go to every Department Head at United Artists, advising me what has or is being done! This must definitely stop for if it continues you will absolutely destroy our working relationship'. (Harris 1957e)

Harris insisted that HKPC should not be treated any differently than Bryna, 'after all our money is as good as anyone else's. The fact that United Artists may advance it is relatively minor as it is deducted from the producer's share in which we have the majority interest' (Harris 1957e). Harris's accusations were not wholly unfounded. For example, there was much correspondence in the early days of the production between Harris, Myers Beck, and Margulies about Harris and Kubrick's desire to have Saul Bass design the film's adverts. But Saul Bass's fee of \$15,000 caused hesitation, and Harris concluded that UA were unlikely to approve the cost (Beck 1957a). Beck insisted that Kirk Douglas himself intervene and contact Max Youngstein and Roger Lewis at UA. Margulies resisted Beck on the issue, stating that Douglas was 'saving his ammunition for "The Vikings"' (Margulies 1957b). Margulies's attitude also revealed who continued to retain power over publicity: United Artists. He'd already been reminded of this on *Paths of Glory*, when UA's Roger Lewis admonished him for not seeking approval for adverts he had placed in regional magazines. Lewis reminded him that, 'There is one thing that I would like to make clear. It isn't merely a matter of your submitting your ads to me [...] I not only want to see proofs but I would like to know what your schedule plans are' (Lewis 1957). The national ad-campaign was taken over by UA's chief of productions, Max Youngstein, who 'wanted to have a real all-out action campaign with no projection whatsoever of unusualness' (Margulies 1958).

What resulted with *Paths of Glory* was a confused promotion campaign, a process that began with Stogel on the set of the film. His press releases concentrated 'very much on the war and violence. Much of it emphasises action sequences. The press releases never even mention the court martial' (Daniels 2015: 94). The only action

sequence in the film was the attack on the Anthill, with the majority of the story centred on the drama and politics of the château and the court martial. We can position the promotion of the film within the wider context of UA's releases at the time, particularly *Attack*. Both films, as discussed above, shared thematic and narrative similarities, with tales of anti-heroes and less than positive portrayals of the military. But the similarities extend to the way the films were promoted with strikingly similar posters (see figure 3).



Figure 3: Posters for *Paths of Glory* (1957) and *Attack* (1956) displaying clear similarities.

Despite the character driven aspects of the narratives of each of the films, with action almost secondary to their stories, the posters both play up the generic contexts of the films: these are war pictures first and foremost. UA, following Youngstein's direction, created ad-copy for the film that used 'clichéd and tired adjectives' that made *Paths of Glory* 'sound like "Time Limit"' (Margulies 1957c). *Time Limit* (1957), the only film directed by actor Karl Malden, was also a UA release and depicted the court martial of a soldier accused of treason. The film poster was also similar to *Paths of Glory* and *Attack* and described the film as showing 'the face of war you've never seen before'. The ad-

copy for *Paths of Glory* drew on simple, alliterative devices, and crafted an image of a generic war picture that dwelled upon the scenes of the attack on the Anthill, with phrases such as ‘the boldest bayonets-charge that ever hacked its way through hell’, ‘there were 8,000 of them...mud splattered, shell-shattered “heroes”’, and ‘the bombshell story of a colonel who led his regiment into hell’ (Beck 1957b). These ideas are played up further in the original theatrical trailers for the two films, each containing similar taglines and descriptions. Over imagery of a war torn cityscape, a title card on screen says that *Attack* tells ‘the story every soldier knew, but none would dare tell [...] this is the raw, naked face of battle...where not everyone is a hero...and not every gun is pointed at the enemy!’ The trailer concludes by claiming that *Attack* is ‘the war story so hot no one dared film it till now’. The *Paths of Glory* theatrical trailer uses almost identical phrasing and marketing suggestions. In a voice over, the trailer announces that ‘no one dared to make this movie. It was too shocking, too frank’. The trailers play into the social and cultural atmosphere of the time and the type of controversial film being produced by UA in the 1950s. Just three years prior to the release of *Attack*, Otto Preminger’s UA-backed *The Moon is Blue* had been released without PCA approval and had been a success; similarly, his *The Man with the Golden Arm*. UA’s policy of creative autonomy allowed independent producers to create films that broke social and cultural taboos, but in doing so UA had to market them appropriately in order to attract a wide-ranging audience. The success of Preminger’s films, in spite of their perceived scandalous nature, led to a climate where both *Attack* and *Paths of Glory* drew on their own controversial themes and narratives.

What they also did was to mislead the audience into believing the films were purely combat films and that the controversial nature of their stories was in their grim depiction of war, not in the ethical dilemmas discussed away from the battlefield in character driven stories. As Richard Daniels suggests, the *Paths of Glory* trailer emphasises action, fighting, and the courage of the soldiers in the battle sequences, with ‘no footage at all taken from the crucial court martial scene. A scene which is integral to the film is omitted by one of the main marketing tools available’ (2015: 94). Kubrick did try to intervene, feeling that the focus on the film as a war picture was in fact detrimental to base appeal, particularly in areas such as New York with its young liberal demographic. He wrote to Myers Beck (Bryna Productions Sales Representative for the

Eastern USA) and asked that the adverts include a headshot of Suzanne Christian (stage name for Christiane Kubrick), the only significant female character in the film, to 'imply that there is a love interest in the film' (Kubrick 1958). Kubrick's reasoning came down to the fact that *Darby's Rangers* (1958) had taken a similar approach and had achieved huge success. He felt this indicated that, 'the emphasis of "Darby's Rangers" advertising campaign, namely four romances as well as its obvious action sales appeal, may have been more appealing than the straight action plus class review approach of "Paths of Glory"' (Kubrick 1958). Kubrick even went so far as to suggest new copy to accompany a photograph of Christiane that read, 'one girl amidst two thousand men' (Kubrick 1958). The suggestions were not heeded, however, and the film failed to achieve its anticipated grosses. Even the national trailer, which Kubrick had personally overseen, had a waltz scene cut in January 1958 that featured, in Kubrick's words 'lots of pretty girls dancing' (Kubrick 1958). Harris and Kubrick, for all their autonomy in the production of *Paths of Glory*, were largely impotent in areas of publicity and distribution. Realising this, Kubrick had addressed his above concerns to Public Relations rather than to United Artists directly, given that they were 'clearly hostile to every idea that has originated from either Margulies or myself' (Kubrick 1958).

Despite the producing control awarded to HKPC, UA were hesitant to grant full legal authority over every aspect of the picture. Given the financial risk involved in such a bleak anti-war film in a conservative era dominated by anti-communist McCarthyism tendencies and Cold War paranoia, there was never any guarantee that the film would be a success with American audiences. UA, in an attempt to mitigate risk, therefore stopped short of awarding the film's producers full control over the sale of the film. But by granting producers a degree of creative control, UA had opened a Pandora's box. By giving an element of autonomy, UA (and later other Hollywood companies) would see the producers wanting ever more control, particularly over the way their films were packaged and sold to the public. The creative innovations and maverick attitudes of the likes of HKPC could not be content with seeing their films taken out of their control during the crucial stage of promoting it. UA had unleashed a power struggle that Kubrick was ready to lead the vanguard of independent producers in winning in the 1960s.

### **Lew Wasserman's Monopolisation of the Package-Unit System**

The June 1958 issue of *Picturegoer* included an article titled 'Kirk is King' (Anon. 1958c: 8-9). The article argued that Douglas had come to dominate Hollywood's new mode of production, the package-unit system. By the end of the 1950s, Douglas and other independent producers had 'wiped out the cinemoguls. The top actors have taken over as top dogs in Hollywood' (8). The piece suggested that Douglas had been 'crowned king of Universal-International, hitherto a tycoon-dominated studio' (8); this followed a deal with Universal to finance and distribute *Spartacus*. Universal had undergone seismic changes in the 1950s, first being taken over by Decca Records in 1952, and then selling its backlot property in Los Angeles to Music Corp of America (MCA) in 1958 (8). The deal between Milton R. Rackmil (president of Universal Pictures) and Lew Wasserman (president of MCA) saw MCA buy the 370-acre Universal backlot, including 150 buildings and 16 soundstages at a cost of \$11,250,000 (Anon. 1958d: 34). Wasserman and MCA had radically altered Hollywood in the 1950s, becoming a talent agency that maximised the power of the actors. One of Wasserman's clients was Kirk Douglas. MCA would also come to represent Harris and Kubrick by the late 1950s, with MCA agent Ronnie Lubin packaging *Paths of Glory* and *Spartacus* (Miller 2000: 67-69).

Some industrial context for Wasserman's place within Hollywood and the state of Universal in the 1950s is useful at this point to understand how *Spartacus* came to be financed by the studio, and ultimately how Kubrick came to direct it. Universal had been in the process of implementing budget cuts prior to the purchase of its backlot by MCA, as well as reducing its production output from around forty pictures per year to twenty (Anon. 1958e: 3). Universal made sure it exploited the historical epic cycle of the 1950s, with *Spartacus* 'an example of U's entry into the big budget field' (Anon. 1958e: 22). Hollywood in the 1950s and 1960s produced a series of historical epics, often within a Biblical (*The Ten Commandments*, 1956) or classical setting (*Ben-Hur*, 1959; *Cleopatra*, 1963). Indeed, many of the films broke records with the size of their budgets and their box office grosses and 'can be counted as some of the most

commercially successful Hollywood films ever released (Russell 2007: 5). *Spartacus* was at the time the biggest budgeted film ever by Universal, at an initial budget of \$4 million, a cost that would be repeatedly revised throughout 1959, particularly following the decision to stage a battle sequence between the slaves and Romans to be shot in Spain. The production budget had risen from \$6,584,750 in June 1959 (Anon. 1960c) to \$9,681,375 by February 1960 (Anon. 1960d).

Universal augmented their specialised blockbusters with a series of low-budget exploitation pictures, including *No Name on the Bullet* (1959) and *The Wild and the Innocent* (1959). This new business strategy also saw them finally fully embracing independent producers and the package-unit mode of production, ‘emerging as a major competitor to United Artists and Columbia’ (Anon. 1959f: 5). Despite not achieving as many deals as the latter two studios, Universal was attracting high profile names, including the likes of Rock Hudson, Doris Day and of course Kirk Douglas, all clients of MCA. This was more than mere coincidence. MCA’s chief executive, Lew Wasserman, had been working on the purchase of the Universal backlot for sometime, with an eventual eye to a total takeover of the studio (which was finalised in 1962) (Bruck 2003: 176-177). Wasserman had instigated the trend for actors to form incorporated businesses and negotiated innovative deals for them with the studios (McDougal 1998: 152-153). As Douglas Gomery indicates: ‘Wasserman serviced his star list well, but needed some sort of new service to become the king of agents. He found it in the tax code’ (2005: 205). What followed, as more creative talent signed up to MCA, were package deals:

Wasserman learned how to maximise commissions by selling the agency’s talent in packages – a writer plus a director plus stars – so a single movie would pay multiple fees. Packaging was one of his prime innovations, and thereafter became standard operating procedure [...] attracting the attention of actors and directors, who now demanded a stake in the films they made. Wasserman gave birth to a true auteur system. (Gomery 2005: 206)

Wasserman enjoyed great authority and influence over his clients and ensured he was involved in ‘all phases of the creative process’ (207). For example, with Hitchcock’s *Rear Window* (1954), *Vertigo* (1958), and *Psycho*, Wasserman had ‘made the deal, approved the scripts, watched rushes and approved the final release [...] [Wasserman]



was a skilled leader who loved to work with Hitchcock making movies and making money' (Gomery 2005: 207).

The changing economic circumstances of Hollywood throughout the 1950s and 1960s coincided with 'all of the key creative personnel behind the epic trend [...] [having] reached positions of great influence. Changes in the industry opened up a space for these filmmakers to work with the largest budgets' (Russell 2007: 30). This position of influence, the 'space' opened up for the creative personnel and in particular the actors, was in large part due to Wasserman, MCA, and his instigation of the package deal. Therefore the extent of Lew Wasserman's influence on Douglas's career by the end of the 1950s should not be underestimated.

Following MCA's purchase of the Universal backlot, Wasserman had increasing influence over the business operations of Universal and its product. MCA rented the backlot to Universal as well as allowing them access to its list of clients (Anon. 1958d: 34). It was Wasserman, Douglas's agent, who had suggested that he pitch *Spartacus* to Universal following its rejection by UA and other studios, and that he attach a big name director to the project (at one point, Laurence Olivier had been announced as the director (Anon. 1958f: 13), while Douglas even approached David Lean (Douglas 1958a)). Consequently, Universal, encouraged behind-the-scenes by Wasserman, agreed to a multiple picture financing deal with Bryna (Douglas 1988: 306-307). What resulted was what *Variety* termed a 'big cash investment' by Bryna:

Kirk Douglas' Bryna Productions, with a forward look, has earmarked 11 features and three telepix series during the next three to four years, and allocated a company record of \$30,000,000 for combined program – \$25,000,000 for theatrical releases and balance for TV. Company has added four features, which reps a 60% boost, to elevate it into the position of one of Hollywood's top indie outfits. (Anon. 1958g: 20)

To what extent Wasserman or Universal influenced and even pressured Douglas over the choice of director for *Spartacus* is an issue that is unclear. Anthony Mann was announced as the director of *Spartacus* in October 1958 (Anon. 1958h: 3), and had departed by February 1959, just two weeks into the shoot (Anon. 1959e: 17). Kubrick replaced Mann three days later, after a hurried phone call from Douglas (Appendix I). Jeffrey Richards asserts that Universal had insisted that Mann be hired as the director of *Spartacus*, saying that Douglas fought with Universal to replace Mann (Richards 2008: 85). This contradicts other accounts, such as that of James Howard, who argues that

‘within two weeks, Mann was fired from the movie – again at Universal’s insistence’ (Howard 1999: 67). Vincent LoBrutto suggests that Universal’s previous success with a series of Westerns directed by Mann and starring James Stewart made Mann their choice to direct *Spartacus* (1997: 170-171). LoBrutto overlooks the fact that it had been Wasserman who had packaged and sold these Westerns to Universal, and that both Mann and Stewart were MCA clients (Gomery 2005: 205-206). What the accounts of the production of *Spartacus* overlook, from LoBrutto (1997) and John Baxter (1998), to even more recent accounts such as Radford (2015), is the importance and influence of Lew Wasserman and MCA. As Kirk Douglas described the situation:

At the beginning of *Spartacus*, Lew Wasserman at MCA was my agent; he worked for me. In the middle of shooting, MCA bought Universal; I worked for him. For an entire movie studio, MCA paid \$11,250,000, three-quarters of a million dollars *less* than the budget of *Spartacus* (Douglas 1988: 326).

Universal had been re-energised by MCA’s buyout of Universal City and with the use of MCA’s talent roster (Anon. 1959g: 20). MCA had become the driving force for Universal’s makeover, and Wasserman was becoming ever more influential over the company. Douglas is revealing in how much he credits the influence of Wasserman in the production of *Spartacus* in his biography *I Am Spartacus! Making a Film, Breaking the Blacklist* (2012). He says that Wasserman insisted he hire Anthony Mann to direct and felt that a strong director – a technician – was needed for the film. Douglas repeatedly phoned Wasserman to suggest other potential directors, as he recalls:

Joe Mankiewicz. Now there was an idea. He’d done *Julius Caesar*, and we had worked well together on *A Letter to Three Wives*. He had just finished writing and directing *The Quiet American* with Audie Murphy. Joe had nothing on his plate. I called Lew Wasserman. No pleasantries, just a quick, “No, Kirk. With a budget this big, Universal wants a technician they can manage. That’s not Joe”. (Douglas 2012: loc 775)

Throughout his career, even once he’d fully taken over Universal in 1962, Wasserman remained conservative in his directorial choices. Even when it came to *Jaws*, with which Wasserman created the summer blockbuster, he was hesitant to hire Steven Spielberg, asking his producers “‘Wouldn’t you be better off with one of the sure-handed guys who’s done this kind of picture before?’” (Wasserman quoted in Shapiro 2002).

Wasserman eventually summoned Douglas to his office and insisted that he hire Anthony Mann (Douglas 2012: loc1039-1051). Mann was a high-profile client of MCA and one of its most commercially successful directors – a ‘sure-handed guy’. Douglas realised he had no choice and so abided by Wasserman’s advice. Clearly, Douglas had not been able to assert influence over Universal or, more importantly, his own agent to hire the director he initially wanted: Kubrick. Repeatedly in correspondence throughout the pre-production of the film, Douglas talks of wanting to make an ‘unusual film’, one that was both commercial and artistic (Douglas 1958b). Kubrick was exactly the kind of director in this regard. Douglas confirms this in his biography, saying that ‘I like people who come up with ideas to make things better; Tony Mann had very little to say’ (1988: 316). Stan Margulies, who wrote to Philip Scheuer of the *Los Angeles Times*, further documented Douglas’s attraction to Kubrick’s directing style. Scheuer had written that Douglas had hired Kubrick because ‘presumably he could be handled’ (Margulies 1959). Margulies reprimanded Scheuer, saying the reason he was hired was because he was a ‘very talented director’ and had achieved critical praise for his directorial accomplishments to date (Margulies 1959).

Given that Mann was fired mid-shoot, there was a need to hire an immediate replacement director. And given that Kubrick was affiliated to Bryna, and that Douglas could entice him with new contractual arrangements for HKPC, all parties relented and he was appointed on 13 February 1959. Still, the result of hiring Kubrick, along with the ever increasing budget, saw pressure being put on Douglas by Universal, and in turn on Kubrick by Douglas: ‘Kirk Douglas was obliged to defend his choice of director to Universal, so started to put pressure on Stanley, and they got somewhat antagonistic toward each other’ (Howard 1999: 68). Conscious of costs, budgets and schedules, Douglas and Universal ‘wanted him to shoot quicker...to make cuts and not to cover as much as he did’ (68).

Lew Wasserman’s MCA had come to monopolise package deals through its extensive client list of writers, producers, actors and directors. MCA’s package came to dominate late 1950s Hollywood, culminating in the takeover of Universal. At this point, Wasserman had to divest himself of MCA due to a series of federal investigations into his business practice. But the influence of Wasserman upon the issue of control and the

impact on the role of the producer was immeasurable and was especially felt by Douglas on *Spartacus*.

### **Determining Control of *Spartacus***

During the production of *Paths of Glory*, Harris and Kubrick spoke about the possibility of disbanding HKPC, an idea that they relayed to Kirk Douglas. Douglas immediately contacted his lawyer, Sam Norton: 'I talked to Jimmy and Stanley the other day. They have told me that after this picture [*Paths of Glory*] they are splitting up. How would this affect my contract with them?' (Douglas 1957). Bryna and HKPC were, after all, engaged in a multi-picture contract. Douglas's letter to Norton went on to reveal his thoughts about the maverick duo:

My primary interest is to make a deal with Stanley Kubrick. He is a very talented fellow, but needs a lot of help, much more help than he cares to admit. At this point, I will see what I can do with Harris, although I certainly don't want to insult him. (Douglas 1957)

Douglas wanted to see if he could make individual contracts with both Harris and Kubrick. He was thinking about his own legal authority and the desire to control a creative maverick like Kubrick, with little need for an independent producer such as Harris. There had been persistent contractual battles between HKPC and Bryna ever since their initial deal on the 9 January 1957. Attempts to quell the concerns over the contractual arrangements with Bryna Productions resulted in a revision by 6 February 1957, when both parties signed a more detailed agreement that outlined precisely their roles and responsibilities as employees with Bryna Productions (Harris 1957a). Kubrick would not sign this revised agreement for a number of months however.

Following the completion of *Paths of Glory*, HKPC repeatedly tried to breach their contract by entering into deals with other production companies, including Melville Productions to produce *Mosby's Rangers*; this would mean that Harris and Kubrick would be unavailable to Bryna for at least nine months (Harris 1958). Bryna's lawyers responded by reminding HKPC of their contractual obligations (Norton 1958). The increasing frustration on the part of Bryna at HKPC's obtuse and deliberate attempts to avoid their contractual obligations resulted in a threat of legal action as early as June 1957 (Harris 1957b). Harris explained that he felt, with the agreement of Kirk

Douglas, that further contractual revision was necessary. This was essential if Harris and Kubrick were to follow through on their threats to dissolve HKPC:

The original concept of the agreement was for Bryna to acquire the services of Harris and Kubrick as a team. This is definitely impossible at this time regardless of whether or not a contract exists. So as long as we all know that such a situation is not workable, why try to force it. (Harris 1957b)

This complicated history of HKPC is not accounted for in current Kubrick Studies literature. Therefore, it is difficult to ascertain how seriously to take the threat of HKPC disbanding as early as 1957. Certainly, Bryna and its lawyer, Sam Norton, treated it with the upmost seriousness. In a letter to Kirk Douglas in July 1957, Norton laid out the situation as it stood, explaining that Harris and Kubrick had apparently ‘disassociated themselves’ from each other (Norton 1957c). But what should be taken into consideration is that as soon as HKPC had secured Douglas to appear in *Paths of Glory* their ‘goal was to get out of this deal, somehow, someway’ (Appendix I). Harris and Kubrick may have seen the dissolving of HKPC as a possible route out of their contract with Bryna. Their strategy of overdevelopment, with a number of unrealised projects to their name, may also have been a way for HKPC to remove themselves as quickly as possible from the deal. It is notable that the project *I Stole \$16,000,000* was on the Bryna books as of September 1957, just over three months after production on *Paths of Glory* had finished (Norton 1957a).

What was unfolding was a battle for control: while Douglas found himself being ever more controlled by Lew Wasserman, he saw the opportunity to gain control of Kubrick and Harris. The revised contract put to HKPC during the production of *Paths of Glory* had been left unsigned by Kubrick for several months. Kubrick’s refusal to sign hinged on one word in the contract:

Stanley wants the word “including”, appearing in the next to the last line of this paragraph on page 7, changed to “excluding”. In other words, Stanley wants artistic control of each picture in which he works. (Norton 1957c)

The line in question legally obliged Kubrick to relinquish all artistic authority to Douglas, ‘in all matters including those involving artistic taste and judgment’ (Harris 1957a). Changing this was not something Douglas could allow as he saw the power residing with him as the producer and executive of the independent company. This was

demonstrated clearly on *Spartacus*, which was in theory produced by Bryna's vice-president Edward Lewis, but which saw Lewis deferring to Douglas's authority as executive of Bryna:

As one Universal-International studio executive has said: "Douglas is on every single facet of filming this movie. He is consulted about wardrobe, lighting, casting, background, historical data...everything." Adds another: "Kirk's the driving force of every picture he does [...] Kirk calls all the shots". (Austin 1959: 6)

As the contract stated, Harris and Kubrick were to become employees of Bryna and therefore would lose any kind of legal authority over the pictures they worked on. That resided with Douglas (Harris 1957a). The threat to disband HKPC eventually dissipated and Kubrick signed the revised contract, the wording unchanged. But the need to legally surrender artistic control was too much and by 1 May 1958, the four-picture contract between Bryna and HKPC was terminated (Bryna 1958b). It was at this time that HKPC had entered into a six-month arrangement with Marlon Brando's Pennebaker Productions to work on an adaptation of *The Authentic Death of Hendry Jones* (1956) (LoBrutto 1997: 158-165). The arrangement, however, did not work, with Harris soon suspecting Brando of being devious in his intentions: 'I think that Marlon really just wanted to direct the picture himself, but he needed someone to do the technical, you know, the setting up of the shots and all that stuff, you know, which Stanley could do' (Appendix I). The deal between HKPC and Pennebaker was terminated early, but Kubrick still received a \$100,000 payment (Appendix I).

Meanwhile, a 'Termination and Release Agreement' had been drawn up with Bryna, which Kubrick this time signed promptly. But due to the early termination of the original contract, a number of clauses were enforced that involved fees being paid by HKPC to Bryna on future productions they were involved in. This included repayments for development on projects such as *I Stole \$16,000,000*, and punitive clauses that saw HKPC paying Bryna a sixty-six per cent share of net profits if they produced and released *Mosby's Rangers* (Bryna 1958b). The termination agreement also called Harris and Kubrick's bluff over their 'disassociation', stating that, 'if Harris-Kubrick Pictures Corporation discontinues business, contract covers James B. Harris and Stanley Kubrick individually' (Bryna 1958b). Despite their release from the four-picture deal with Bryna, HKPC was still legally bound to them in any future moves they made. The termination agreement included an appendix of stars that HKPC was unable to use in

the future without incurring further punitive net profit fees of twenty per cent; the list read like a roll call of Lew Wasserman's MCA clients, including John Wayne, Marilyn Monroe, James Stewart, Rock Hudson and Gregory Peck.

There were also issues around ownership of the script of *I Stole \$16,000,000*, a project that Kubrick wanted to ensure was in the possession of HKPC. He had written the script based on Herbert Emerson Wilson's book (Douglas 1988: 324) and there were various legal manoeuvrings between the two companies to gain possession of the work (Kubrick 1960b). As the likelihood of a picture being produced by Bryna, Douglas, Harris, and Kubrick became ever more improbable (Douglas was actively preparing *Spartacus* for production throughout 1958 and HKPC was involved in deals with Brando, as well as looking to adapt *Lolita*), the termination agreement of 1 May 1958 was legally amended. On 30 March 1959 Bryna put together a 'loan-out agreement for the services of Stanley Kubrick' in return for Douglas surrendering any interest in an adaptation of *Lolita* and excluding it from any of the conditions of the termination agreement (Bryna 1959). HKPC's volte-face on working with Bryna and Kirk Douglas again arose out of self-interest in several areas: the need for HKPC to make back the investments made on *The Killing* and *Paths of Glory*, with Kubrick's fee for directing *Spartacus* being paid into the company's accounts (Appendix I); the need to protect *Lolita* and HKPC's artistic and legal authority of that property from Bryna; and the need to negotiate out of the fee waiver clauses of their termination agreement. Hiring out Kubrick ensured that not only did Douglas agree to not being involved in *Lolita*, but that Bryna also 'waived its rights to elect the 20% interest' in the film (Lewis 1959).

What is interesting in the eventual loan-out agreement drawn up between HKPC and Bryna is that there were no explicit references to the issue of artistic control, an area that had been the undoing of the original four picture contract between the two companies. Kubrick was officially hired from 16 February 1959 at a rate of \$5,000 per week (HKPC 1959). That Kubrick was drafted in merely as hired help was underscored by a clause stating that Bryna could not use his name or image in general advertising, but only in connection with *Spartacus* (HKPC 1959). Far from being under the control of Bryna or contracted in affiliation with Bryna, Kubrick remained a HKPC employee with few obligations to Bryna on *Spartacus* beyond ensuring it was competently directed. In fact, the deal went as far as to absolve HKPC from any responsibility should

Kubrick's work on *Spartacus* not satisfy Kirk Douglas and Bryna: 'we shall be in no way responsible to you if, without our fault, the director shall fail, refuse, or neglect to perform for you the services above described, or if such services are unsatisfactory to you' (HKPC 1959).

Absolved of any legal authority or responsibility to Universal – his contract was with Bryna, not with Universal – Kubrick seemingly went about directing the picture in his usual style, looking for artistic shots and having a high shooting ratio (Radford 2015: 102). Fiona Radford (2015) has explored Kubrick's artistic contribution to *Spartacus* and how he was able to make (limited) script suggestions (103-109). This in part came about because of the collegiate atmosphere on set, in which Douglas welcomed opinions and discussions of the film and script (Douglas 1959b; Radford 2015: 103). Douglas was certainly open to persuasion and, even though the ultimate decision remained his, was willing to facilitate Kubrick's suggestions and working methods. For instance, Kubrick showed a tendency to direct the smallest of details during scenes featuring hundreds of extras, to the exasperation of the crew (LoBrutto 1997: 181-182). Douglas accommodated this behaviour by sending a memo to the assistant director, Marshall Green, asking him to 'instruct one of your assistants to keep a careful eye on all the extras [...] a careful observation by one of your assistants can help Kubrick quite a bit in concentrating on other areas' (Douglas 1959c). Douglas also admitted to producer Ed Lewis that he had been 'weaned off' certain scenes in the script, including the 'mass wedding scene, because of the 'subtle influence of twenty-nine year old Kubrick' (Douglas 1959a).

Radford ends her exploration of the production of *Spartacus* with a brief but highly significant point, saying that 'we should not underestimate the impact that this film had on Kubrick's career; his colleagues believed that Kubrick was using the epic in an attempt to "hit the big time"' (115). Here was the chance to direct a major Hollywood epic, featuring one of the most popular stars of the day, along with a high status cast of Shakespearian actors, and an \$11 million budget. Harris and Kubrick saw no disadvantages, particularly with no contractual responsibilities beyond merely providing directorial services for *Spartacus* (Appendix I). Kubrick took advantage of the new modes of production in Hollywood, with the package deal allowing for spaces of autonomy (of various degrees). This meant that on *Spartacus*, as Douglas possessed



legal authority, he was the one responsible to Universal, not Kubrick. As Douglas himself said: 'When I make a film if it doesn't turn out good then it's my own damn fault' (Austin 1959: 6). Douglas allowed Kubrick a modicum of influence as part of his own producing style, in which he facilitated a form of collaboration among his senior team. This can be seen in light of his desire to create both a commercially viable film and one with artistic vision (Douglas 1959b).

Kubrick would reflect on *Spartacus* in later years with Michel Ciment, saying of the relationship between the film's producers and him as director, that: 'if I ever needed any convincing of the limits of persuasion a director can have on a film where...he is merely the highest-paid member of the crew, *Spartacus* provided proof to last a lifetime' (Kubrick quoted in Howard 1999: 69). The limits of persuasion Kubrick referred to can be interpreted as legal and contractual obligations or restrictions: the power of the producer or the director was in their respective contracts with the production companies. For Kubrick when he was working on *Spartacus*, this meant the ever-present threat of his immediate dismissal by Kirk Douglas and Bryna. Though the hastily arranged deal did not expressly state issues around artistic control, it did have a clause that stated Kubrick could be dismissed at any time if he 'fails, refuses or neglects to perform his required services' (HKPC 1959). If this occurred, HKPC was obliged to financially compensate Bryna Productions for the termination.

## **Conclusion**

On 15 December 1961, Bryna Productions and HKPC made a final deal with each other, one that saw them parting ways permanently. This time, the split was to be permanent, unlike the complicated arrangement that had been reached in 1958. The only repercussions of the termination were three payments, totalling \$40,000, that had to be paid by HKPC to Bryna Productions in instalments through to December 1963: failure to pay these fees on time would result in further punitive measures, legal action, and even potentially the reinstatement of the 1958 deal (Kaplan 1962). However, in principal, HKPC was now free of the nearly five-years' worth of legal authority Bryna and Kirk Douglas had had over them. As Leon Kaplan, lawyer for Bryna Productions put it, the agreement, 'gives these individuals a full and complete general release in

connection with any transactions of any kind between the Harris-Kubrick company [...] and Bryna and Kirk individually' (Kaplan 1962).

Throughout the five years of what at times seemed like never-ending contractual negotiations between HKPC and Bryna Productions, Harris and Kubrick found themselves acting independently and with the advice only of their lawyer, Louis C. Blau. Their agents at MCA recused themselves from the contractual wrangling and disputes due to fiduciary responsibility and dual representation. As Richard Harris, an MCA agent said, with regards to issues around the ownership of *I Stole \$16,000,000*: 'Accordingly, I [Richard Harris, MCA] am withholding from making any comment in respect of the proposed agreement' (Harris 1962). In contrast, Douglas retained the ear of his MCA agent, Lew Wasserman, throughout the packaging, production and distribution of *Spartacus*. Though it is not clear to what extent Wasserman influenced proceedings or had sway over Douglas with regards to HKPC, the advantage was certainly in Bryna's favour.

HKPC's advantage, and in turn Kubrick's, was in the spaces of autonomy that the industrial transitions in Hollywood offered. With *Paths of Glory*, HKPC was given relative creative autonomy on both the development and shooting of the script, allowing them to craft a bold anti-war film that firmly established their position within the industry as visionary producers. The film suffered, however, from a lack of control over its publicity and exploitation. With *Spartacus*, Kubrick could take the credit of director of a multi-million dollar picture that was a huge box office success, regardless of the level of his autonomy on set. The commercial success of *Spartacus* combined with the artistic prestige of *Paths of Glory* gave HKPC the necessary combination of esteem and financial clout to advance their future projects. Harris himself noticed the difference in his attempts to package *Lolita* post-*Spartacus*:

They knew about *Paths of Glory* and *The Killing* and they knew that Stanley was doing *Spartacus* with Olivier and Laughton and Ustinov and Kirk. And, you know, we had this tremendous prestige going for us that we were able to get the actors to agree to do the screenplay. (Appendix I)

As Peter Krämer has pointed out, 'Somewhat ironically, the huge commercial and critical success of this mega-budget film [*Spartacus*] – which Kubrick had

comparatively little control over – finally established him as an important player in Hollywood’ (2013b).

The limits of persuasion came to dominate Kubrick in the coming decade. He would analyse his contracts in fine detail, highlighting single words (just as he had done with the original Bryna/HKPC contract) that might affect the limits of his power as a producer. Such powers stemmed from the contract struck with a studio and this was something that could be negotiated. Lew Wasserman had facilitated these new industrial circumstances throughout the 1950s and had flipped the power base within Hollywood: power was taken from the studios and given to the actors, who formed their own companies and became their own producers. In effect, Wasserman had turned Hollywood into a talent driven agency, with the new independent corporations having their own PR departments to protect their image. But the one area in which studios and distributors were retaining control was over publicity and promotion of a film, the very thing used to create a brand. If Kubrick was going to gain full legal authority over his pictures he needed to create his own corporations and his own brand.

## Chapter Four:

### Spheres of Influence: Polaris Productions and *2001: A Space Odyssey*

The 1960s saw Kubrick's control as an independent producer grow exponentially. At the start of the decade he had found himself in a contract with Kirk Douglas that amounted to artistic bondage and deprived him of authority as the director of *Spartacus*. By 1968, he had produced and directed a \$10,964,080 science fiction epic, *2001: A Space Odyssey*, largely without interference from his financial backers, MGM (Sklar 1988: 188). Yet attention is rarely given to how Kubrick managed to gain such influence in such a short time, perhaps in part because of how, as discussed in the Literature Review, academics became fixated on the formal composition of *2001*. Robert Kolker's recent work, *The Extraordinary Image*, manages to account for Kubrick's meteoric rise in just two sentences, saying that *Spartacus* had caused him to flee Hollywood where he began 'making his films as a one-man cottage industry. The financial success of *Lolita*, *Dr. Strangelove*, and *2001* gave him the security he wanted and a unique relationship with Warner Bros. [...] and that allowed him the independence he needed' (Kolker 2017a: 39). Kolker's brisk history is indicative of how literature has largely not accounted for Kubrick's transformation as a producer in this decade. There have been moves towards better understanding this period, including Mick Broderick's *Reconstructing Strangelove* (2017), which explores Kubrick's mounting confidence as a producer in his legal battles with the producers of a rival film to *Dr. Strangelove*, Sidney Lumet's *Fail Safe* (1964):<sup>17</sup>

Kubrick remained pragmatically open to any idea that might maximise his box-office returns. In early 1965 he raised the idea of piggy-backing off the domestic *Fail-Safe* release, suggesting to Columbia that it could run *Dr. Strangelove* with *Fail-Safe* as a double bill. (Broderick 2017: 110)

Peter Krämer positions Kubrick's rise within the wider contexts of his career, with MGM investing in Kubrick because of the success of his previous films (2010: 32).

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<sup>17</sup> A plagiarism suit was brought against the authors and producers of *Fail Safe*, instigated by Peter George (author of *Red Alert* (1958), the source novel for *Dr. Strangelove*). For further reading see Broderick (2017: 97-114).

*Spartacus*, *Lolita*, and *Dr. Strangelove* were all commercial hits of varying degrees and had led to MGM noting Kubrick's 'unusual combination of qualities: artistic ability, management ability, and a sense of coherence. And, not least, a splendid sense of economy' (Robert O'Brien cited in Krämer 2010: 108).

But this was a complex decade, heavily influenced by the industrial transformations in the mode of production that had taken place in the mid-1950s. As the 1960s progressed, there were changes to the advertising and publicity strategies of the major studios and this represented an opportunity for Kubrick to seize further control of his films and to further renovate his function as an independent producer. From the outset, *2001* made extensive use of Kubrick's American based company, Polaris Productions, in order to create one of the largest merchandising campaigns in Hollywood history up to that point. The film itself had been pitched to MGM as an epic in space, Kubrick deeming it 'How the Solar System Was Won', a nod to the MGM epic-Western *How the West Was Won* (1963), a film with a budget of \$14 million that grossed over \$50 million and, like *2001*, was made for Cinerama projection (Bizony 2014: 21). MGM were looking for further Cinerama movies to be road-showed in the mid-1960s, particularly following on from the industry successes of *Lawrence of Arabia* (1962) and *The Sound of Music* (1965). MGM executive, Robert O'Brien, wanted new films that offered the chance for sweeping vistas as exhilarating as those in *How the West Was Won*, but also 'delivering fresh excitements for audiences [...] Kubrick and Clarke had every reason to think that space opened up superb possibilities for a widescreen extravaganza' (Bizony 2014: 21). Cinerama had been developed as a way of competing with television and to encourage audiences to attend the cinema following a decline in audience figures (Maltby 2000: 163). One of the key motivations behind MGM's decision to finance Kubrick and *2001* was the Cinerama format (Bizony 2014: 415); a justifiable position given that the film would eventually gross \$1 million from eight Cinerama theatres in the USA on its opening run, while in Tokyo the Cinerama theatres had advance bookings in the thousands, and in London the opening weekend was a record breaker for the Casino Cinerama (417).

This chapter will explore Kubrick's rise as an independent producer in the 1960s via his company Polaris Productions and the way in which Roger Caras, the company's vice-president, envisioned an ambitious publicity and merchandising campaign for

*2001: A Space Odyssey*. The chapter will examine the functions of Polaris Productions, the role of vice-president of the company, and of the way Kubrick used Polaris to wrestle control of publicity, merchandising and exploitation of *2001* from MGM. The film will be positioned within the industrial contexts of the mid-1960s and the changes that had taken place in publicity and merchandising as a result of the transformation of industrial practices that now saw a favouring of independent producers. Throughout the production, Caras and Polaris liaised with MGM and were at the front of the battle for power between Kubrick and the company, ensuring promotion and marketing was handled correctly and that the Kubrick 'brand' was at the forefront of the publicity campaign. The development of Kubrick as a producer in the early 1960s saw him significantly advance his ideas and authority over publicity, with increasing tension with the studios financing him. Kubrick liked to maximise the publicity of his films, even when the situations were controversial, as in the plagiarism suit on *Dr. Strangelove* (Broderick 2017: 104-105). By 1962/63, Kubrick was pushing for further control in this area, contributing ideas to Columbia that were not always welcome or sought; he even initiated marketing of *Dr. Strangelove* on his own at one point, 'contacting magazine editors with a view of securing publicity' (Krämer 2013b). This was despite Columbia not agreeing with Kubrick's ideas or his 'estimation of the film's commercial potential' (2013b). Such moves by Kubrick were vital in the realignment of authority away from the major studios to the emerging 'super producer' role that Kubrick was creating for himself.

### **'The Day of the Merchandiser Has Come': Industrial Contexts**

In the 1960s major studios began reconsolidating their power around their publicity, exploitation and merchandising departments, with studios such as Paramount, MGM, Columbia and UA substantially expanding these departments in the early part of the decade. In part this was down to the changing modes of production and how independent producers had created what UA's Roger Lewis termed 'spheres of influence' for themselves within the industry (Anon. 1959j: 14). Lewis saw changes ahead in the way films were to be promoted because of the change of mode of production in Hollywood, with the industry 'beginning to experiment with a more progressive concept of film advertising' (14). Independent producers were allowed at

least consultancy rights on the advertising campaigns of their projects with UA, and they were 'vitally interested in the success of their pictures' and were not 'burdened with excessive traditionalism' (14). Lewis felt that, 'The day of the "merchandiser", and I mean the term in the total sense, is yet to come' (14).

Many of the studios ad-departments were run by executives that were seen as the 'old guard', men who held conservative attitudes to experimentation and new methods (14). But the 1960s brought substantial reorganisation and the sweeping away of this old guard. Along with the growing spheres of influence of independent producers, the industry itself was transforming and the studios sensed they had to modernise their advertising departments to 'conform with the "new" motion picture industry that is presently emerging' (Hollinger 1961: 7). Several factors contributed to this 'new' industry: the rise of the independent producer, an emerging and increasingly dominant youth audience, the suburbanisation of the cities, a decline in cinema attendance and a rise in television, and changes in consumer habits. Company strategies always kept this in mind, with Columbia recognising that they had to market more towards a growing under-thirty demographic, based on projections of population statistics (Cassidy 1964: W-2), while Twentieth Century-Fox realised they had to diversify their advertising, focusing drive-ins on the family audience through a process of 'de-sexing' their ad-campaigns (Hollinger 1961: 36). This had to be done 'subtly so that the younger generation won't catch on' (36). The changes in advertising were summed up by Twentieth Century Fox's vice-president for publicity and advertising, Charles Eingeld, in January 1961:

A major change that has taken place in film advertising concepts is that exhibitors are no longer buying pictures but the publicity and advertising campaigns. "They don't even have to see the picture," he says. "It's like selling soap. A supermarket will stock a brand of soap if it's convinced the manufacturer is backing his product with a big ad campaign. That's what is happening with pictures. It's a tremendous development". (Hollinger 1961: 36).

These conditions therefore led to the growth of publicity and merchandising departments in the 1960s. For instance, Paramount expanded its operations in 1966 with the creation of three new executive posts to work under Joseph Friedman, vice-president and director of advertising and public relations (Anon. 1966c: 3). The aim was to create

a new 'top level creative and operational team [...] designed to serve Paramount's long and short-term merchandising and marketing needs' (3).

Prior to the 1960s, most studios would not begin promotion and publicity until the film was complete, or 'more likely they began after the advertising department had taken its first look at the finished production' (Steen 1961: 8). However, by the late 1950s this was beginning to change. Columbia, for instance, revitalised their merchandising operations based on what they called their 'Campaign-in-Depth' strategy (8). Columbia increased the intensity of their merchandising campaigns in order 'to reach a massive pre-sold audience' (8). This may have been an influence of the exploitation practices of independent companies such as American International Pictures and Allied Artists in the mid-1950s. Teenagers were targeted in marketing campaigns that sought to tie-in a movie with its soundtrack, particularly with rock 'n' roll films such as *Blackboard Jungle* (1955) (Maltby 2000: 168-169).<sup>18</sup> Films such as *The Cardinal* (1963), *The Victors* (1963), *The Quick Gun* (1964), *Psyche 59* (1964), the 1964 re-release of *The Bridge on the River Kwai* (1957), and *Dr. Strangelove* saw Columbia put together its most ambitious and far-reaching merchandising campaigns ever. *The Victors* was the company's largest ever campaign, with multiple tie-ins, such as with a women's fashion line, heavy promotion of the soundtrack album, and a deal with Dell Publishing for a paperback novelisation (Anon. 1964f: 26). Their promotion of *The Devil at 4 O'clock* (1961) began before the film had even entered production, with advertising layouts being designed and 'ideas for the trailer blueprinted' (Steen 1961: 8). Columbia's publicity department 'lived with the picture throughout its production and even its preparation so that every avenue of merchandising would get the individual attention of the department's personnel' (8). *Gidget* (1959) had its 'promotion angles' created before the script had even been completed (Steen 1961: 8). The strategy of the likes of Columbia saw audiences being pre-sold the picture a long time in advance, as much as three years in the case of *The Guns of Navarone* (1961), with Columbia setting the 'pace' for future film merchandising (Steen 1961: 8).

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<sup>18</sup> *Blackboard Jungle* made extensive use of the song 'Rock Around the Clock' by Bill Haley & His Comets, the film built 'around the title music' (Maltby 2000: 168). The song became a number one hit as a result of its use in the film (169).



This strategy, soon being adopted by other studios (Cassidy 1964: W-2), invariably required a level of involvement and cooperation of the independent production company and producer. The major distributors began to allow producers to appoint a representative that could liaise with the respective advertising department. This led to a tension over control between the independent producers and the distributors. UA's Roger Lewis, despite his earlier optimism about the coming 'day of the merchandiser' (Anon. 1959j: 14), had by 1961 changed his opinion. He believed the sphere of influence that producers had obtained was leading to an attitude that saw them try to intrude upon publicity. He derisively said in an interview to *Variety* that a 'large group of independent producers and theatremen' regarded themselves as experts on publicity, exploitation and merchandising (Hollinger 1961: 7). The new industrial conditions and spheres of influence meant that 'a "producer" can be anybody – a star, a director, a writer, or a businessman – but the moment he receives the title of producer he automatically becomes an authority on publicity and advertising' (7). This was compounded by the fact that the publicity representatives hired by the independent production companies to liaise with the majors 'take a "narrow" view i.e. to worry primarily about the producer's personal ego and his status on the Hollywood circuit. That means getting column breaks etc. [...] their tendency is to keep their clients happy and to overlook the big, wide world that exists beyond them' (Anon. 1959j: 14).

Still producers like Kubrick found that their contracts largely prohibited their involvement in advertising matters. For example, Kubrick's contract with MGM for *2001* reveals that he had a good deal of artistic control over the actual production, but that when it came to publicity, he merely 'had the right, but not the obligation, to consult with us in the formulation of the final policy to be used [...] It is expressly agreed that our decision with respect to the formulation and development of such advertising and publicity policy shall be final and binding upon you' (O'Brien 1965). This required Kubrick's cooperation with MGM, because long-range publicity planning depended on access to the production. Take *Lawrence of Arabia*; while it was still in production, its producer, Sam Spiegel, sent forty-minutes worth of footage to the Columbia headquarters for the sole purpose of,

showing the advertising department a sample of what was to come. The footage gave the promotion men a solid foundation on which to work so that the advertising copy, the

merchandising plans and general promotion could be analyzed, studied and prepared with an eye toward maximum penetration. (Steen 1961: 8)

Without full cooperation such long-range planning would be almost impossible. The next section will look at how Kubrick set in place a new production company to exploit the spheres of influence opening up in advertising and merchandising and his level of cooperation with MGM.

### **Polaris Productions: A Producing Powerhouse**

Kubrick's opportunity to define his own legal authority and to further exploit the industrial transformations in Hollywood came in 1962 following the dissolving of HKPC. On 10 October 1962, Kubrick's lawyer, Louis C. Blau, incorporated the first of two new production companies, Polaris Productions, in Los Angeles (California Secretary of State 1962). Blau acted as the agent of Polaris and put together an agreement between the company and Kubrick as a director-producer, despite Kubrick being the company president. This was quite possibly to enshrine in contract the legal authority that he sought when 'loaning' himself out from Polaris to his independent productions, which were to be produced by Hawk Films. The agreement stated that Polaris exclusively employed Kubrick's services as a producer and director and that he was not to render his services to 'any person, firm or corporation other than ourselves' (Blau 1962: 1). This contract can be seen in the light of HKPC's past arrangements with Bryna Productions; Kubrick was not going to make the same mistake again. For instance, perhaps wanting to avoid issues with property rights as had happened with *Lolita* and *I Stole \$16,000,000* with Bryna, Kubrick assigned the rights of all literary work and original material that he owned to Polaris and agreed not to 'permit any person, firm or corporation in any way to infringe upon such exclusive rights' (2-3). The contract also included a clause that prohibited Kubrick from being employed by any other motion picture producer or production company, but that Polaris could loan out his services to producers or production companies (3). Subsequently, Polaris would loan Kubrick's services as a producer and director to his other production company, Hawk Films.

Hawk was incorporated on 23 October 1962, fifteen days after Polaris, and was based in London. This was a move to obtain further control by Kubrick, who set up

filmmaking bases in both the UK, where he could exploit the British Film Fund (see Chapter Two), and the USA. By the beginning of January 1963, Hawk Films had opted for membership of the Federation of British Filmmakers (FBFM) (Anon. 1963f: 22), a union of independent producers. The Federation lobbied major distributors, the Board of Trade, and international organisations on behalf of its members, with a central priority being the retention of independence and control for film producers in an increasingly internationalised film industry (Myers 1962: 16).<sup>19</sup> Membership of the FBFM represented a further move by Kubrick to consolidate his own sphere of influence via Polaris Productions and Hawk Films.

Polaris and Hawk remained Kubrick's principal production companies throughout the next two decades, though other companies were also incorporated along the way, including Peregrine (*Barry Lyndon*), Harrier (*Full Metal Jacket*), and Empyrean (see Chapter Six). The relationship between Polaris and Hawk can be understood in correspondence between accountants working for Kubrick and the UK government's Board of Trade. The chartered accountancy firm Bromhead, Foster & Co. wrote to the Board of Trade in April 1968 to outline how *2001: A Space Odyssey* had been made by Hawk Films in an agreement between it, Polaris, and MGM:

The principal terms of the agreement [are] that M.G.M. and Polaris would provide various facilities to the maker including the story rights, the services of Stanley Kubrick (producer/director/writer), Keir Dullea (actor), Gary Lockwood (actor) and various other non-UK personnel and would provide the finance necessary for the making of the film. (Anon. 1968a)

Once *2001* was completed, Hawk Films was required to assign the film to Polaris and MGM, the latter handling the film's distribution (Anon. 1968a). It would seem that Hawk was primarily a company concerned with production and creativity, while Polaris was Kubrick's publicity and merchandising division, where 'brand Kubrick' was formulated (discussed further in Chapter Five and Six). Hawk had the much larger payroll, and employed technicians and other crew as well as the vast majority of the cast and extras. Polaris, on the other hand, had a much smaller payroll, including the producer/director (Kubrick, at a cost of \$450,000) and the film's stars – Keir Dullea and

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<sup>19</sup> To date, there has been no study of the Federation of British Filmmakers, or its rival union, the British Film Producers Association, and the impact of these unions on the rapid internationalisation of the British film industry in the 1950s and 1960s.

Gary Lockwood – and the company received numerous expenses and participatory profits for Kubrick (Anon. 1968a).

Polaris became fully operational during pre-production of *Dr. Strangelove*. It was initially based at 120 East 56th Street in Manhattan's Midtown, before relocating to 239 Central Park West by 1964, the latter an apartment that had belonged to Kubrick. The structure of the company saw Kubrick as its president, with a vice-president who ran the day-to-day operations. Nat Weiss was the first to perform this role in December 1962 after he left Twentieth Century-Fox where he had served as a publicity manager (Anon. 1962b). He outlined his duties at Polaris in a draft press release that he sent to Kubrick:

The new veeps duties will cover the full range of the production company's activities including advertising, publicity and distribution. Weiss will work in close association with Kubrick and serve as liaison between the production company [Polaris] and the distributor of its product [MGM]. (Weiss 1962b)

Weiss would not last long in the role, however, and was dismissed by Kubrick in July 1963 following the publication of *The Cleopatra Papers* (1963), a book that Weiss co-authored with a Twentieth Century Fox colleague, Jack Brodsky. It was an exposé of the affair between Richard Burton and Elizabeth Taylor during the troubled filming of *Cleopatra*, told through the letters and phone calls between Weiss and Brodsky, with the book creating 'a stir in the entertainment industry with its revelations about the Burton-Taylor affair, as well as the administrative power wars at Fox' (Anon. 2008: 35). The book was seen as salacious gossip mongering, and annoyed industry insiders more for its making public 'the behind-the-scenes business transactions of one of the major film production companies going through financial difficulties' (VWS 1963: 17). Many in Hollywood condemned the book, including Ken Clark, vice-president of the MPAA, who described the book as vilifying the film industry: 'You besmirch an entire medium of communications with slander. You have accomplished one thing. You've exposed to all what it is really like inside the Inner Sanctum' (Anon. 1963b: 4). Clark said that Weiss and Brodsky had 'slyly concocted juicy scandalous and salable morsels for publication' (4). This adverse publicity as well as Kubrick's desire to keep his own productions confidential probably caused the dismissal of Weiss after just over six months in the job (Anon. 1963c: 7).

In fact, none of those who took up the role of vice-president of Polaris lasted long in the position (see figure 4). As discussed later in this chapter, Roger Caras's working relationship with Kubrick was often fraught with conflict (though, it must be stated that by all accounts their friendship was strong and remained so throughout their lives (Bozung 2011a)), and he resigned after just eighteen months in the role. More tragic was Benn Reyes, a fine administrator and more liable to follow Kubrick's orders than assert his own authority; he died of a heart attack on 8 December 1968 aged fifty-three, just eighteen months into the role. Reyes was in Stockholm at the time publicising *2001* (Anon. 1968d: 60).

The clearest indicator of Kubrick's thinking in creating Polaris and the role of vice-president is seen in correspondence between him and Weiss, prior to Weiss's appointment to the role. Kubrick and Weiss go into detail about how they envision Polaris and its place within Kubrick's productions, and the role and responsibilities of vice-president. Kubrick seemingly invested Weiss with a lot of authority, which presented Weiss with the opportunity to 'line up the people we should have – the best publicity writer, the best stills man going' (Weiss 1962a). It was Weiss's job – the Polaris vice-president's job – to put the Kubrick brand front and centre of the various distributing companies policy. In the case of *Dr. Strangelove*, Columbia Pictures. Weiss stressed that,

as your New York office, I will be a force to move a *Lawrence [of Arabia]* dominated Columbia. [...] I will also personally deliver certain major breaks a major company just doesn't act on (which may be why you never had a picture properly handled before). This will not be done by bypassing Columbia, but my working closely here with them. (Weiss 1962a)

The Polaris vice-president was to be a liaison between Kubrick and the studios financing him. Publicity had become central to Kubrick's view of filmmaking and was a key element that he needed control over throughout his production. As seen in Chapter Two, the publicity and distribution handling of his earliest features had been out of his control, often with deleterious effects on their box office performance. He'd also undergone a power struggle over publicity during post-production of *Lolita*. The establishment of Polaris Productions created a new producing powerbase, spearheaded by the company's vice-president, that would battle to control publicity on his films as well as protect his own brand. Kubrick saw the role as a de facto executive producer,

promising and coming close to giving such a credit to Roger Caras on 2001 (Caras 1966n).

<b>Polaris Productions Vice-president &amp; Publicity Director 1962 - 1973</b>	
<b>Name</b>	<b>Years Occupied Role</b>
Nat Weiss	1962-1963
Roger Caras	1965-1967
Benn Reyes	1967-1968
Mike Kaplan	1971-1973

*Figure 4: Vice-presidents of Polaris Productions Inc., 1962-1973*

Kubrick, then, was creating for himself a company from which to exert influence and control over his role as a producer. Other independent producers, such as Kirk Douglas, had incorporated publicity companies in parallel to their production companies. Douglas's Public Relations Ltd had a similar function to Polaris, in that it was both a liaison with the publicity departments of the distributor, but also aimed to assert control over publicity and exploitation and to protect the image of Kirk Douglas as a producer and actor. Kubrick had gone further with Polaris, however, enshrining his control and power as a producer over his own projects in a legal contract. Polaris saw Kubrick setting out to grow his sphere of influence as an independent producer and the contract with Polaris – with himself – would impact upon his thinking in any future deals with major distributors. This is seen in contract negotiations with Columbia in June 1964 for a new project following *Dr. Strangelove*. Kubrick minutely analysed the contract and wrote a twenty-three-page critique of it (see Krämer 2015a). One point in the contract stated that negative costs needed to be compared to other pictures of a similar cost being produced by Columbia at that time. Kubrick stresses that there may be no comparable 'independent producer with great influence producing a picture', placing his own statute as an independent producer against the likes of Sam Spiegel and Otto Preminger (Kubrick 1964a: 9). Kubrick now envisioned himself as a significant independent producer who required, 'complete total final annihilating artistic control', and urged the distributors to reduce their own power to merely one of approval over the budget, the two principal stars, and issues over censorship approval (6).

The next section considers more closely how Polaris Productions proceeded in asserting this sphere of influence during a period when it became a fully functioning company on *2001* and was headed by Roger Caras.

### **When Spheres of Influence Collide: Polaris versus MGM**

In August 1966 Roger Caras wrote to Kubrick with confidence in his claim that, ‘I know you are giving me executive producer [credit]’ (Caras 1966n). Such a credit was not undeserved given the scope of Caras’s role in the producing of *2001*. After all, it had been Caras who had introduced Kubrick to Arthur C. Clarke in 1964, as Kubrick noted in his original letter to Clarke when approaching him about collaborating on a science fiction project (Kubrick 1964b). Following the dismissal of Nathan Weiss in the summer of 1963, the role of vice-president of Polaris Productions remained vacant during the post-production of *Dr. Strangelove*. During this period, Caras was the Columbia publicity manager and worked closely with Kubrick on the film (Anon. 1965a: 13), along with Mo Motham and John Lee (LoBrutto 1997: 244). Kubrick became acquainted with Caras as he would ‘haunt the Columbia publicity offices’ in an attempt to assert influence over the *Dr. Strangelove* publicity campaign (244-245). Caras eventually resigned as Columbia’s National Director of Merchandising in May 1965 to become the new vice-president and publicity director of Polaris Productions, and a vice-president of Kubrick’s Hawk Films Ltd (Anon. 1965a: 13).

Caras was born in 1928 in Methuen, Massachusetts. He’d graduated from the University of Southern California in 1954, majoring in cinema, prior to which he’d served in the army where he had studied filmmaking during his tours of East Asia (Hammond 2000). By the mid-1950s, Caras was working for Columbia, initially in the company’s exploitation department, before moving to its radio and television division (Anon. 1956k: 90). His rise through the ranks at Columbia was meteoric. In 1960 he became a general executive for the company, in 1961 he worked as an assistant to Paul N. Lazarus, Columbia vice-president (Anon. 1961: 64), and in 1962 was an assistant director to Joyce Selznick, head of the talent and story department (Anon. 1962a: E4). By 1963, he was the company’s exploitation manager, supervising twenty-nine field promotion staff (Anon. 1963b: 12). The experiences and skills he built up at Columbia would prove invaluable during his time working for Polaris Productions, particularly skills developed in exploitation and merchandising, areas that would play a crucial role

in the pre-production and shooting of *2001*. Caras had overseen the merchandising tie-ins of a number of Columbia films, including *Dr. Strangelove*, where he had coordinated the promotion plans for the novelisation of the film, a soundtrack record, and a tie-in with a candy company (Anon. 1964a: E8). Caras had been central to the growth in publicity in merchandising campaigns at Columbia. For *Good Neighbor Sam* (1964), he conducted a two-day brainstorming session with his own staff and over thirty New York metropolitan area theatre circuit executives in a bid to ‘cover every possible promotional detail’ (Anon. 1964b: E1). Caras made these meetings a part of his exploitation strategy, similarly using it on *The Bridge on the River Kwai* and *First Men in the Moon* (1964) (Anon. 1964c: 11), where he briefed exhibitors and Columbia publicity department staff about the relevant national campaign (Anon. 1964b: E1). He also developed what became known as the ‘flying squad’, a crack force of exploitation specialists. This force was put to use on a number of Columbia releases, including *First Men in The Moon*:

Showcase participants can make use of the flying squad without delay merely by making a telephone call to the home office. A [theatre] manager in need of aid will receive a personal on-the-scene consultation from as many exploitation specialists as necessary to insure success of a local-level campaign. (Anon. 1964c: 11)

The strategy that Caras was pursuing was part of Columbia’s wider policy direction, in which ‘the era of the two-week “all out” campaign at release time is over’ and ‘exploitation at the local level begins not two weeks but two years in advance – the day a property is mounted for production’ (Anon. 1965b: 11). A component of this strategy saw the establishment of a ‘communications network’ whereby constant communication would be kept between the studio, the production and the field staff via a network of well-informed assistants (11).

Caras attempted to construct his own power and sphere of influence at Polaris shortly after his appointment as vice-president and conducted interviews to recruit assistants in order to build his own communication network. One such assistant was Ivor Powell, who became the Publicity and Art Department Liaison on *2001* and a key colleague for Caras (Bozung 2011b). The company had, however, limited resources; despite being a California registered business, it operated out of a New York address. Following the establishment of the New York office, Nat Weiss had joked to Kubrick that he had ‘spent a quarter and bought that primer about running a one man, one girl



office in New York' (Weiss 1962a). Kubrick was concerned about setting up a Polaris bank account in New York, given its status as a California corporation. Instead, all of Kubrick's major accounts were directed to the UK and a limited cash expense account was run for the Polaris office, with weekly expenses to be sent to Ray Lovejoy, who worked for Kubrick's Hawk Films (Lovejoy 1966). Kubrick kept a watchful eye over this expense account and would query Caras over the slightest financial irregularity. Caras found this situation dissatisfactory, complaining that Kubrick knew full well 'how extremely difficult this will make things [...] this represents a hardship and an inconvenience' (Caras 1966a).

Despite his supposed devolved control of Polaris, and the 4,000 miles between him and Kubrick, Caras found himself becoming increasingly and persistently micromanaged, demonstrated in the fact that Caras had to seek permission from Kubrick on almost all matters (Kubrick 1966a). Kubrick also wanted Caras to implement a communication system that would allow them to be in constant contact (Kubrick 1966a). On occasions when Caras did not first check with Kubrick about an issue, he would find himself reprimanded. For instance, in July 1966, Caras, in conversation with Mort Segal of MGM discussing the release date of *2001* and whether it would be delayed, had said that he had 'not heard of any delay nor did [he] see why there would be one' (Caras 1966b). Kubrick, on Caras telling him about his comments to Segal, responded by telling him not to ever 'take any responsibility for discussing what, why, when and where on my behalf' (Kubrick 1966c). With *2001*, Caras would liaise with MGM's Dan Terrell, an individual who had been instrumental in fashioning the modernisation of publicity and merchandising.

Terrell, MGM's executive director for worldwide advertising, publicity and promotion, adopted what industry insiders called a 'punchier' publicity strategy (Anon. 1965c: 10); punchier given MGM's conservative reputation in advertising, publicity and exploitation. Terrell was promoted to the role of director of exploitation in February 1950, following the retirement of William R. Ferguson (Anon. 1950a: 10). Prior to his promotion, Terrell oversaw the supervision of advertising and publicity for Loews Theatres outside of the New York area. He joined MGM in 1940, working as the Washington D.C. advertising publicity director (Anon. 1950a: 10). MGM in the 1950s began implementing new exploitation and publicity strategies that they said were

‘unmatched in scope in the company’s history’ (Anon. 1952a: 18). MGM’s new strategy saw the absolute centralisation of publicity and exploitation at a national level, ‘handled individually in a manner established through determining the box office potential as gauged in pre-release test engagements’ (18). Terrell was central to this new strategy, building up a powerbase within MGM. By 1952, he had subsumed publicity under his command, merging it with the exploitation department (Anon. 1952b: 22), a move Terrell saw necessary to extract the ‘salient features’ of the two respective departments (Anon. 1952c: 17). By 1963, a further merger saw Terrell become the executive director of advertising, publicity and promotion, a role he would keep for the remainder of the decade and from which he would try to retain power from independent producers (Anon. 1963c: 7). His new role came about as part of an organisational restructure at MGM, with Clark Ramsay promoted to executive assistant to company president Robert O’Brien and placed in charge of a new ‘marketing group’, in which ‘all future creative advertising promotion, selling and research activities’ were integrated under him (7). The restructure brought the entire production process under the coordination of the triumvirate of O’Brien, Clark and Terrell, ‘from selection of a property through to release’ (7).

The restructure came about as a response to what MGM saw as the ‘complex of masses’ that made up the cinema audience by the mid-1960s (Anon. 1963d: 6). Worried about the state of the film industry by the 1960s and their own poor box office takings, MGM aimed to ‘design pictures for these mass segments and seek every possible method of reaching them more effectively and efficiently’ (Anon. 1963d: 6). Terrell aggressively took this new strategic approach forward, saying ‘this policy of pre-planning advertising, publicity and promotion in advance of the completion of a particular product [...] allows us great freedom in determining which approach is best for that particular product’ (Anon. 1963e: 4). He strengthened the approach with the appointment of Mort Segal. Segal worked as Terrell’s special assistant, assisting him ‘in all areas of advertising, publicity and promotion in this newly created post at MGM’ (Anon. 1965d: 9). Terrell commented in *Boxoffice* that Segal’s appointment was part of a ‘further move designed to strengthen the growing MGM publicity, promotion and advertising departments in relation to the increased line-up of important films about to be released and going into production’ (9). Terrell had overhauled MGM’s publicity

department by 1965, creating his own sphere of influence that would come in to conflict with independent producers.

Terrell and his team began an attempt at asserting their power over Polaris and 2001 once contractual agreements between Polaris and MGM had been reached. Terrell contacted Caras to inform him that he had commissioned his team to prepare artwork for a 'special letter head to be used here for all releases on the picture' (Caras 1965a). Terrell had grown accustomed to controlling the strategic approaches to publicity on MGM product. For *The V.I.P.s* (1963), he had mapped a two-month step-by-step promotion plan for the film, taking it up to the initial release of the picture (Steen 1963). MGM released *The V.I.P.s* on a mass booking arrangement in over 700 theatres and decided to pursue a 'new concept' in promotion:

one that would ease the task of the exhibitor and, at the same time, give him a day-by-day plan of organization and applied action [...] There was no precedent on which to pattern a press book that would be designed exclusively for those 700 plus theatres, inasmuch as press books usually are created for the mass market. (Steen 1963: p.b1)

*The V.I.P.s* was considered the most exciting MGM picture in years and Terrell intended to further generate excitement through the publicity, promotion and exploitation of the picture. His approach was thorough and controlling devising step-by-step activities for exhibition managers with promotion activities mapped out in sequential order: 'Exhibitors [were] ordered to first read the manual from cover to cover and then to contact their local MGM field press representative who would arrange to coordinate the local campaign with that on the national level' (Steen 1963: b1). The remarkable press kit for the film (see figure 5) included lobby cards and posters, and prepared publicity stories to be planted in the local press on exact dates as instructed by Terrell. His promotional and exploitation campaign was extensive, with sketches of the clothing worn by Taylor being placed in women's magazines and in department stores, while adverts for the film were placed in in-flight magazines on Trans World Airlines and a paperback novelisation was released by Dell Publishing (b1-b2). As trade papers noted, Terrell's press kit and promotional campaign for *The V.I.P.s* was unprecedented:

Judging by an examination of the pressbook, it appears that something new has been added to promotion suggestions. The day-by-day schedule planning is believed to be a first, but not likely to be the last. It appears certain that Terrell and his staff have pioneered a new concept in promotion. (Steen 1963: b2)

Given Terrell's power at MGM and his control of promotion, publicity and exploitation, Caras was to face an uphill battle in his liaising between Kubrick and MGM.



Figure 5: MGM's press kit for *The V.I.P.s*, coordinated by Dan Terrell (Steen 1963: b1)

Polaris put in place various measures to assert their own authority, such as a complete breakdown of the rates for adverts in national newspapers that would be 'instantly available for reference as a way of creating ideas for exploitation and responding quickly and with apparent knowledge to any suggestions which come from the motherland' (Kubrick 1965) – the 'motherland' was Terrell and MGM.

In October 1965, Caras wrote to Kubrick to say that he had explained to Dan Terrell that 'it was mandatory you [Kubrick] be given the opportunity either directly or at least through me to approve all ads, all designs, all artwork, all copy' (Caras 1965a). Kubrick was instigating a power battle with Terrell. This was an area that Kubrick felt he had to have control over as producer, decentralised structurally to his Polaris Productions. Terrell was, on the surface, understanding of Kubrick's desire but he still set his team about creating a marketing strategy and exploitation plan (Caras 1965a). The aim was to encourage and excite what MGM referred to as the 'larger mass of people, the infrequent ticket buyer' by selling *2001* as an 'enormous social epic' (Buck 1967). Central to this idea was the film's grand philosophical and religious themes,

what MGM saw as its profound Christianity, and importantly the visual spectacle of Cinerama, all of which would 'lead to the most profound promotion that has ever been designed for a picture' (Buck 1967). Peter Krämer (2015b) has argued how *2001* was marketed as a family film, which the above MGM strategy also suggests. And certainly, as discussed below, Kubrick and Polaris also felt this was the appropriate marketing strategy. But of course it required Kubrick's full cooperation.

Caras set out in detail to Kubrick how he saw Polaris and his own role functioning as production on *2001* commenced (Caras 1965b). Polaris would act as a factory that turned out daily promotional copy – what Caras termed 'a regular supply of column news bits' (Caras 1965b) – all of which were to be sent to Dick Winters at MGM New York to be planted in the press (Caras 1965b). Caras also wanted to devise a Polaris Productions newsletter that would be regularly sent to MGM field representatives and other key contacts. He described the newsletter as being a 'news chatty type thing to keep people posted on the progress of the production' (Caras 1965b). This never went ahead because of Kubrick's need for absolute control and secrecy over what was occurring on the set at Borehamwood (though such a promotional device was later used by independent producers such as Michael Klinger (Spicer and McKenna 2013: 5-6)).

Caras was in daily contact with Kubrick, to whom he would send multiple letters and faxes, including what Caras headed his 'Carasgrams' – bulleted updates on ongoing issues. But the powerbase that Kubrick and he was constructing at Polaris soon began to cause consternation and resentment within MGM's publicity and promotion department. On 26 October 1965, Caras wrote to Kubrick about the issue of placing adverts in foreign national newspapers, such as *The Guardian*, *Der Stern* and *Le Figaro* amongst others. Caras, in confidence, outlined to Kubrick how MGM staff, in particular Arthur Pincus, were 'not very happy about all of this, Stan, and feel that they are doing this simply to make you happy' (Caras 1965c). Pincus could not understand the worth of placing adverts in publications such as *Le Figaro* at a cost of nearly \$25,000, when the film was not scheduled for release until May 1967 at the earliest (Caras 1965c). Caras said that MGM had concluded that 'you're the greatest, but you are not right in this' (1965c). Regardless, MGM went ahead with the adverts in order to demonstrate their commitment to Kubrick and his production (1965c).

The working relationship between Arthur Pincus and Caras became increasingly fraught, a symptom of the friction between the two rival publicity powerbases. The tension came to a head in December 1965 in a letter Caras wrote to Pincus regarding MGM's plan to place an announcement advert for *2001* in *The Sunday Observer* (Caras 1965d). Pincus had alerted Caras to the advert only days before the go-ahead, against Caras and Kubrick's request for a coordinated advertising schedule. Caras responded to Pincus with the following:

One thing I think, Arthur, that we must settle and settle now, is our personal working relationship. Stanley Kubrick is a very reasonable man and I like to think that I am too. Stanley is perfectly willing to sit down and discuss any intelligent proposal that is properly presented. Witness the fact that your suggestion for the Sunday Observer presented to Stanley in a reasonable manner resulted in his agreement with the proposal. Compare this with your suggestion that I go to him and tell him that he was not serving the picture, that he was not serving MGM, that he was, in fact, doing absolutely nothing but serving his own ego. [...] Do you honestly feel for a moment that the best way to deal with a creative personality, with anyone in fact is to hurl insults at them? (Caras 1965d)

Caras's letter is an indication of the building tension between MGM and Polaris Productions about who possessed the authority and agency over *2001*. Caras became a conduit through which MGM believed they could control Kubrick. At one point Pincus phoned Caras and demanded that he tell Kubrick that 'he's not bright enough to know the difference between worthwhile effort for his motion picture and his own ego' (Caras 1965d). The above letter sent by Caras had undergone several drafts, some of which contained Kubrick's own annotations. The final draft ended with a paragraph stating that *2001* had enormous earning potential and that collaboration was essential between MGM and Polaris, with both companies jobs being to 'officiate at the conversion point between investment and earnings' (Caras 1965d). This was a direct challenge to MGM by Kubrick through Polaris Productions. The role of the producer had to include authority over every area of the film production, and this despite the financial investment by MGM, included publicity, promotion and exploitation.

### **Polaris versus Kubrick: Exploiting the Future**

Merchandising tie-ins and exploitation was key to *2001*'s production and was built into the very fabric of the film's aesthetic. It also became the primary function of Caras's role. He approached a range of companies to supply props and other tie-ins, though not

all of these ventures were successful. For instance, computer giant IBM was asked by Caras in June 1965 for their ‘mutual participation in the production and merchandising of *2001: A Space Odyssey*’ (Caras 1965e). Polaris and IBM entered an informal agreement that saw IBM assisting Polaris in the supply of design consultation for the film, ‘specifically assisting the designers and technical members of the Polaris staff prepare designs for the onboard computers to be found on the spacecraft, on the moon, on the orbiting Earth station, and on Earth itself’ (Caras 1965e). IBM intended to supply hardware for the construction of props and sets, such as ‘data viewing screens, buttons, switches etc’ (Caras 1965e). As a result of IBM’s cooperation, the company’s trademark was to be displayed ‘as prominently as possible’ throughout the film, though Polaris was keen to stress in their agreement that ‘prominently’ meant ‘in keeping with the action of the scene in the context of the story [...] the director must have, of course, complete license and control but there can be no possible doubt that IBM will receive extensive exposure within the body of the film’ (Caras 1965e). The draft agreement with IBM outlined potential merchandising ideas for the release of the film, including a high-level national essay competition with the prize being IBM typewriters and hardware, and the possibility of a reservation system to allow audiences to reserve tickets for a screening anywhere in the world (Caras 1965e).

But Kubrick often met Caras’s ideas and promotional innovations with indifference. In June 1965 Caras suggested that they approach the ‘very promotion minded Hertz’ to use their logo on a storefront during the eventually abandoned Lunar Park sequence (Caras 1965f) – nothing came of it. The strategy that Caras was pursuing led to him creating ‘the most comprehensive merchandising program ever put together in the history of our industry’ (Caras 1965l). In doing so, much was kept hidden from MGM, as Caras was instructed by Ray Lovejoy: ‘All cables of a non-confidential category [...] e.g. non-eyebrow raising’ be sent by direct cable [...] confidential cables e.g. eyebrow raising, panics or general chaos, be sent individually to either Stanley’s home address [...] or my home address’ (Lovejoy 1965). Many of the merchandising tie-ins had to be arranged swiftly during pre-production in order for them to be ready for the film shoot. Revlon, for instance, were to provide make-up and hair design for the film and Caras had to coordinate this with Revlon’s designers and the Head of Makeup on *2001* (Caras 1965g). Caras had to coordinate numerous other merchandising tie-ins,

including the design of a *New York Times* paper, an attaché case (to be supplied by Minneapolis Honeywell), a drinks dispenser (Pepsi-Cola), and watches (supplied by Hamilton) to be worn by the cast, among many other ideas (Caras 1965h).

However, it became increasingly difficult for Caras and Polaris to operate efficiently given Kubrick's desire for centralised control. There was no loop of information, only what Kubrick thought on any given day, which led on more than one occasion to what Caras referred to as 'confusion, confusion, confusion' (Caras 1965i), and on another occasion to his declaring that 'I am beginning to feel like the fifth leg on a horse' (Caras 1965j). Caras's frustrations become increasingly obvious in his correspondence with Kubrick. In one letter he repeatedly questioned Kubrick over the choice of a credit card prop to be used in the Moon scenes, saying,

When we discussed this matter you said you wanted a credit card for the Moon. Why wouldn't it be an American Express card? You said you wanted a bank on the Moon. Why wouldn't it be an American Express bank? American Express is very much in the banking business. (Caras 1965j)

Caras grasped the marketing and merchandising potential of *2001*, even if Kubrick was not always immediately aware of it. For instance, he had to make clear to Kubrick that the designs for a Parker Brothers board game were merely a merchandising opportunity:

When you look at this Stanley, please think of it as what it is. It is the cover of a game box design to sell the game. Please remember also that you are in for a percentage deal on this game and should it take off you will be in for substantial revenue over a long period of time. (Caras 1966n)

In the case of the tie-in with American Express, Caras argued with reference to hard data. The company was willing to promote *2001* via mailing lists that could reach nearly two million homes, as well as place posters in their properties across the USA. As Caras noted, 'That would put a *2001* poster in 4,000 offices, 22,000 banks, and 52,000 other outlets' (Caras 1965j). Between 1965 and 1966, the number of opportunities the film offered for exploitation and merchandising tie-ins with global businesses was immense given the need for a variety of props in designing the future. Caras explained to Arthur O'Dell of General Mills that,

It suits the purposes of our story very well to reveal in the picture consumer products as they will appear in the first year of the 21st century. It will help the general audience to



relate directly to a film where otherwise the technology might be somewhat too formidable for our dramatic purposes. (Caras 1965n)

Through his interactions with these companies, Caras was expanding on his previous merchandising campaigns at Columbia. *2001* offered the potential for extensive pre-selling. Certainly, the line up of companies was impressive, including Pan-Am, Hilton Hotels (Baron Hilton was to give a lecture titled ‘Hilton Orbitor Hotels’ as part of a conference on the ‘Commercial Utilisation of Space’, which Caras felt needed exploiting), Macy’s department store, Kodak (design a camera of the future), Revell (designing kit models based on the space craft in the film), and MGM Records (Caras 1967b).

But Caras’s frustration about the merchandising potential of the film continued to grow, with Kubrick seemingly not making any firm decisions. As Caras explained in a letter to Kubrick, ‘I am sorry to burden you with this again, but I cannot resolve this without your consultation and these bloody letters are about the only way we can handle it’ (Caras 1965j). The decisive optimism and energy that Caras espoused in the early days of his appointment to Polaris had dissipated after several weeks working at the company and the realisation that every decision – *every* minute detail – had to pass through Kubrick, which inevitably resulted in a blockage. Caras emphasised that he knew creative control resided exclusively with Kubrick, but he attempted to assure him of his own administrative and business expertise:

Please understand Stan that I do not attempt here to impose any of my thinking on the aesthetic values you are building into this film. I would not presume to make proposals about the aesthetic contents once you have taken a position [...] I can do nothing more on American Express until I have your further thinking [...] They’re going to be tremendously important and valuable to you when it comes to box office dollar time. (Caras 1965j)

At other times, Kubrick’s centralising of power slowed the production of the film drastically and Caras complained of working at ‘cross purposes’ (Caras 1965k). Decisions were also mysteriously undone without his knowing, such as when two companies, Seabrook Farms and General Mills, who were being used for merchandising tie-ins for the food eaten by the astronauts, were dropped and replaced by Bird’s Eye. Caras commented on this situation in a letter to associate producer Victor Lyndon, asking, ‘is there something I don’t know? Is there some particular reason why this

matter is being pursued? [...] We're going to end up here with a very bad reputation' (Caras 1965k). Caras had agreed a merchandising opportunity with General Mills to create a food product called '2001'. It was to have been launched in 1967 to coincide with the film's original release date. Caras's obvious disappointment in not pursuing the General Mills opportunity is clear from his earlier excitement:

Stan, do you realise what this would mean? We would have them spending several million dollars at the time of the picture's release, pushing their product, all of it tied in together with point of sale display in every supermarket and food store in the USA. (Caras 1965m)

The merchandising opportunity did not go ahead. Kubrick's indecisiveness also began to have unintended, but serious consequences. Tom Buck, for instance, who worked as an advertising agent for *Look* magazine, had spent months working on an advertising supplement for the magazine on *2001* in liaison with Caras. Kubrick, however, would not give the final go-ahead and the project fell through. Buck was fired by *Look* due to having gone 'so far out on a limb for this project and then had it crumble beneath him because he could not guarantee dates' (Caras 1966f). Kubrick sent apologies and asked Caras, 'Can I write to anyone at *Look* and explain it is my fault?' (Kubrick 1966b). As a compromise, Buck was appointed on a short-term contract to MGM by Dan Terrell, tasked with working on various marketing strategies, and was later briefly employed by Hawk Films.

Kubrick's move to expand his sphere of influence and to control all aspects of the film's production led some to question his producing ability and the impact it was having on the commercial potential of the picture. Dan Terrell vocalised these concerns with Caras in November 1966, and Caras found himself agreeing with Terrell's criticisms of Kubrick's management and producing style (Caras 1966c). Terrell had been in discussion with executives at Columbia about Kubrick's transgressions on to areas of producing they felt he should not have been involved in on *Dr. Strangelove*, certainly not to the extent he wanted. Columbia were adamant that Kubrick's overbearing producing style had an adverse effect on the box office potential of *Dr. Strangelove*, due to his 'insistence on a number of ill-advised points in the advertising style' (Caras 1966c). Terrell believed the same thing was occurring on *2001*, only on a much larger scale and with the likelihood of a much more devastating effect:

He [Terrell] said that he did not think you [Kubrick] were always realistic in matters of advertising and that decisions he should be making you are now making, although you don't have the time to evaluate the long range needs that MGM must be aware of in order to protect their investment. He repeated that he was frustrated more than he has ever been in his professional life and that he felt constrained not to disturb you with endless arguments and disagreements when you still have a film to make, but that this is resulting in definite harm to the film's potential. (Caras 1966c)

The contract between Polaris and MGM only gave Kubrick and Polaris the right to consult with Terrell and his team over the 'formulation of the final policy to be used in the advertising and exploitation' of *2001* and of the accompanying press book, not control (O'Brien 1965). But despite the contractual clauses, Kubrick was still attempting to hold on to power over these areas through a process of obfuscation. Terrell and MGM argued that until Kubrick 'surrendered the right to people equipped to make' decisions, then the full potential of the film, and the potential of individuals such as Caras, would not be realised (Caras 1966c). Caras concluded with the frank admission that Terrell was right:

The unfortunate thing, Stanley, is that their position is not totally unrealistic or unreasonable. Many of the things they say are very difficult to argue against. They want to see film, they want to read a script, they want the right to judge for themselves what is good publicity, what is good exploitation, what is good art and what is good advertising. (Caras 1966c)

Kubrick's obfuscation led to a particular grievance shared by both Terrell and Caras: his refusal to cooperate on the showing of a preview reel at an exhibitor's convention held by the National Association of Theater Owners in New York in September 1966. MGM had chosen *2001* to be their project picture at the convention 'to the chagrin of all other producers' (Caras 1966d). Caras had repeatedly mentioned the convention to Kubrick and the fact that it was hugely important in the 'context of the industry and attracts a great deal of attention' (Caras 1966e). The exhibition was taking place seven months before the initially intended release date of *2001*, but the film still had no representation at the exhibition. Kubrick was stalling and had not provided footage – despite the existence of completed material – or any production stills. Terrell and MGM were in disbelief at the situation and the fact that *2001* footage would be 'virtually missing from the best product reel that has ever been done [...] because you [Kubrick] would not give them footage' (Caras 1966c). Caras warned Kubrick that to be absent from the convention would be a mistake, both in terms of the sales potential of the film, but more

importantly in his relationship with MGM:

Later on when you want things from them [MGM] that entails effort, money, and presumably creativity and imagination, they could reply forcibly that when they tried to make 2001 the big picture you would not even give them two and one half minutes of footage to do it. This is not a simple publicity matter whether or not to give an interview or do a tape. This involves a major decision affecting the whole sales department and MGM image. (Caras 1966d)

MGM executives felt that Kubrick's overriding desire for centralised control of his production was denying them the opportunity to protect their multi-million dollar investment, making Kubrick's lack of cooperation unjustified (Caras 1966d). Some in MGM, including Clark Ramsey, were critical of their own company for allowing Kubrick and Polaris 'complete latitude in everything' and that it had resulted in a mode of production and producing style of that of a 'six hundred thousand dollar art film' (Caras 1966d).

The centralised operation of Kubrick's producing style meant that when senior figures within his companies resigned, the transition to new personnel was complicated. Caras's resignation came in March 1967. The producer Ivan Tors had signed him to write and co-produce three features, all for release with Paramount (Anon. 1967c: 21). However, Caras did not leave immediately due to the need for a handover to the newly appointed vice-president of Polaris, Benn Reyes. Following Kubrick's appointment of Reyes, he informed Caras in mid-March 1967 that Reyes would be travelling to New York by the end of the month for a two week handover transition, a time period that Kubrick felt was 'sufficient' (Kubrick 1967a). Kubrick's prediction was a gross underestimate and by 26 April, Reyes and Caras were still in process of transitioning and Reyes sent a request to Kubrick that Caras be kept on for an additional week 'to complete transitions and indoctrination' (Reyes 1967a). Caras was still working for Polaris in May 1967, and the trades did not announce Reyes's appointment until the beginning of July 1967 (Anon. 1967d: 6). But even following Caras's formal resignation from the company, the complex nature and scope of the project meant that Reyes and Caras remained in contact over the coming months, with Caras guiding Reyes on merchandising, publicity issues, and on locating research for him that Kubrick required (Caras 1967a). Caras's input was perhaps necessary given Kubrick's increasing lack of decisiveness on a variety of issues, leading Reyes to plead with Kubrick in a

cable at the beginning of May 1967 that, ‘These matters and many others need your specific intervention and direction’ (Reyes 1967b). The list of matters Reyes was referring to was extensive, including at least twenty-two outstanding merchandising and promotional opportunities at the time of Caras’s resignation (Caras 1967b). These included with MGM Records, with the company’s Mort Nasatir in discussions with Polaris about the creation of a documentary album filled with interviews on extra-terrestrial life, alongside a soundtrack album; Parker, which had created the *Universe* game that was ready for marketing by the summer of 1967; Western Publishing, with discussions to publish a comic book and children’s book based on the script, though this deal fell through due to Kubrick’s unwillingness to make the script available to the company (Kubrick 1967b); and a deal with Wedgwood, the fine china and luxury porcelain company (Caras 1967b).

The idea for a tie-up with Wedgwood proved to be one of Caras’s quickest accomplishments. He initially briefed Dan Terrell about the potential of the company producing an embossed ashtray with the film’s title and an image of the surface of the Moon, perhaps suspecting that Kubrick would not be sold on the idea (Caras 1967c). Wedgwood wanted to market the ashtray in honour of the Space Age, given the contexts of the NASA Apollo space missions to the Moon. However, Wedgwood did not want to pay royalties to Polaris for the use of the film’s logo. Instead, there was a discussion of whether MGM and Polaris would grant them the use of the film’s logo and imagery without royalty fees. If permission was not granted, Wedgwood was to release the ashtray anyway, sans film title, something that greatly concerned Caras: ‘We will not have the same potential inherent here for store displays. It is not possible to clearly project what kind of a merchandising payoff any one item will give but this is Wedgwood’ (Caras 1967c). Yet, once more, Kubrick was indecisive about the deal:

I urge you to keep in mind the extremely handsome Parker game and Wedgwood ashtray. These are two quality items that have a substantial retail value. The game *Universe* is going to be a smash success [...] The Wedgwood ashtray is something that everyone who received it would keep and use. It is handsome, carries one of the best trade names in the world and is, in fact a collectors’ item. Think on it! (Caras 1967d)

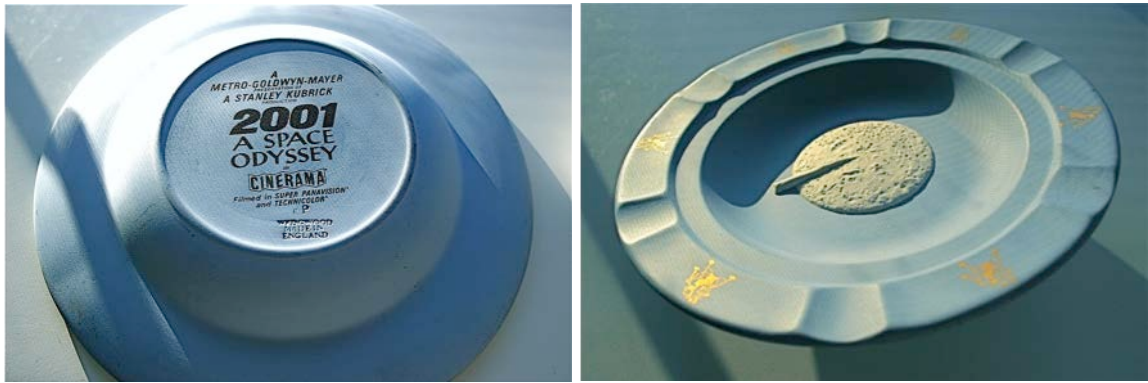


Figure 6. Wedgwood Ashtray used in the promotion of *2001: A Space Odyssey* (Alton 2009). Caras's insistence paid off though, and the Wedgwood ashtray was eventually commissioned in time for release at the *2001* premiere in April 1968 (see figure 6).

Unfortunately a number of the other opportunities that Caras had negotiated all hinged on Kubrick giving a release date for the film, which was pushed ever further back. This is something that Caras persistently pressed Kubrick on, as deals with the likes of *Vogue* and Macy's were facing collapse because no date had been fixed (Caras 1966h). Throughout 1966, Caras requested that Kubrick give him something, even if it was only an approximate target given in good faith (Caras 1966i). Kubrick's response was, 'what if the date I give you is incorrect, either too early or too late? Unless I know this I can't answer your question' (Caras 1966h). Kubrick's desire for absolute control ultimately led to a frustrated production process due to indecision.

What is interesting to note is how, as Peter Krämer has argued (2015b: 40-43), there was significant merchandising targeted at children. This included puzzle books and three jigsaws by the publisher Springbok, colouring books 'and other children's activity devices' with Western Publishing, a desire to produce children's comic books (though this didn't happen at the time, Marvel would later adapt *2001* into a Treasury edition issue, followed by a ten-part comic series in 1976-77 (Fenwick 2015b)), and a board game by Parker Brothers (Caras 1966l). Polaris even struck a deal with Howard Johnson's fast food restaurant, a family centred organisation, which made them, Caras said, 'ideal for us' (Caras 1966m). These ideas were originated within Polaris Productions by Roger Caras and allowed Polaris and Kubrick to steer the direction of the way the film was ultimately publicised, as a family picture (at least initially).

But the frustrating managerial position taken by Kubrick, one of withholding information and decisions, had also led to one of the most unusual publicity campaigns

for a film with a multi-million budget. Very few press releases were issued, with a lack of 'course-of-production publicity on the film, and the absence of color-spreads in the weekly magazines' (Anon. 1968n: 7). This is not to suggest the film was absent from the trades, with speculation rife as to what the film was about and the reasons behind delays in its release (Anon. 1967g: 5). Caras had insisted that Kubrick respond promptly to the merchandising ideas being presented to him, and also repeatedly urged him to authorise the release of stories to the press. Writing to Kubrick in October 1966, Caras said that, 'I think it is time now for us to start getting exposure. The air of mystery that now exists is working for us but I do think we have to start making an impression' (Caras 1966j). Such was the air of mystery that Keir Dullea reported that 'no one knew he was the star of your film' (Caras 1966k). The methods and strategies developed by Caras at Columbia and Terrell at MGM were now being resisted and subverted by Kubrick. Arthur C. Clarke said that the virtual embargo on news breaks was a publicity stunt (Anon. 1968n: 7), but even the publication of Clarke's novel, which had been ready for some time, had been delayed by Kubrick, with bids for publication only commencing in April 1968, concurrent to the film's release (7). This was a highly unusual move, given the merchandising potential of the book (LoBrutto 1997: 298-299). Kubrick had also turned down other potential exploitation opportunities, including selling the sets of *2001* to the International Space Museum in Washington D.C. A deal had been approved by both Polaris and MGM in the summer of 1966 (Lyndon 1966). But by the release of the film, Kubrick had reneged on the deal, despite estimates that profits from any exhibition could reach \$200,000 (Anon. 1968o: 7).

The publicity campaign for *2001* was unique in the era of pre-selling a film and having a long-range publicity and merchandising campaign. MGM launched its 'major mail-order campaign' for *2001* just five weeks in advance of its world première (Anon. 1968p: 7). The campaign included a four-page advert in the *New York Times*, *L.A. Times*, and the *Washington Star*, followed by 'one-a-week one-page ads in seven other papers' (Anon. 1968j: 18). Yet, devoid of access to the production and with resistant cooperation from Kubrick, MGM were forced into using paintings by the artist Bob McCall, which *Variety* described as an atypical move, because of the late arrival of photographic art from the production (Anon. 1968p: 7). Terrell confirmed that the paintings would 'for the moment' form the basis of the publicity campaign, pending

new stills photographs to be approved by Kubrick (7). Terrell was also forced to deny rumours that the use of McCall's artwork was in fact because the publicity campaign was delayed by Kubrick's refusal to cooperate with MGM's publicity department (7). The four-page ads were vague in their promotion of the film, with no credits beyond labelling *2001* as a 'Stanley Kubrick Production' (7). By doing so, the promotion of *2001* became a means to sell the Kubrick brand.

Kubrick's avoidance techniques may have in part been an attempt to assuage MGM of any doubts about the film, which had taken a decidedly abstract turn since the initial pitch. Piers Bizony cites Ivor Powell as saying that Kubrick would phone MGM to assure them the film was fine and send them only a few minutes worth of centrifuge footage 'to keep them distracted. It was always just enough so that they would see that something really good was happening, but never enough for them to understand how the movie as a whole was shaping up' (2014: 413). In turn, the merchandising deals that Caras was making may have steered MGM's publicity department towards a more family-orientated initial marketing campaign, with Dan Terrell in discussions with Caras about Polaris's merchandising activities in the spring of 1967 (Caras 1967b). Peter Krämer talks of how MGM had been persuaded to invest in the project because of their 'perception' of it as a family film (2010: 40). And subsequent to that, the only information that Caras often had and could provide MGM was about his deals with Howard Johnson's or Springbok, tie-ins for children's merchandising, or tie-ups with Macy's department store and Hamilton's watches (correspondence between Victor Lyndon and Roger Caras shows their exasperation at not knowing details of Kubrick's changes to the script (Lyndon 1965)). In effect, then, the merchandising activities of Polaris, with which Kubrick was largely happy to proceed, drove the initial publicity campaign of MGM, a campaign that would change significantly in tone after the film's release (discussed further in Chapter Five).

## **Conclusion**

The central promotional element to *2001* eventually became Kubrick himself. Polaris acted as a sphere of influence by which Kubrick sought not only to wrestle control of publicity from MGM, but also to allow him to have control over his own image. Indeed, the lack of press stories about the production led to what Caras described as a



‘mystique’ developing around Kubrick in Hollywood (Caras 1967e). Caras, who was visiting Los Angeles, told Kubrick that, ‘everywhere I went in Hollywood, they asked about you and the picture. They are terribly curious about the picture and hold you in a kind of reverential awe. The legend is definitely building’ (Caras 1967e). The projection of power within the industry was just as important as actually possessing it, and this was at the heart of Polaris’s publicity strategy, as outlined in correspondence between Caras, Tom Buck and Mort Segal: ‘The editorial focal point must be Kubrick and his involvement in “2001 – A Space Odyssey”. Everything else is subservient’ (Buck 1967).

Whereas in the 1950s Kubrick had to at times relinquish control in order to obtain financial backing or the support of a Hollywood actor, by the 1960s he was becoming ever more resistant and would (unintentionally) frustrate a production by withholding information. Even though the growth of publicity departments at the likes of MGM and Columbia saw these companies wanting to retain control over a film’s publicity, there was an inevitable need to involve the independent producers to whom they had relinquished large amounts of artistic control. This meant that cooperation was needed so that long-range publicity and merchandising reflected the independent producer’s vision. Without this, it made publicity and merchandising difficult for the studios. On *2001* it would seem that MGM decided to invest in Kubrick because they believed him to be fiscally responsible and with excellent managerial ability (even if he did contribute to MGM’s perilous financial state by the beginning of 1968: see Chapter Five) (Robert O’Brien cited in Krämer 2010: 108). MGM would have also been aware of Roger Caras’s excellent track record as a publicity manager at Columbia, where he had devised a number of far-reaching and successful merchandising campaigns. This belief in Kubrick’s abilities and the team he had appointed soon dissipated, and MGM (and Caras) became ever more frustrated by Kubrick’s obfuscation and refusal to cooperate with their publicity department. Arguably, there was very little that MGM could do once the budget had risen steeply and that the solution to their financial difficulties depended on the success of *2001*. Kubrick’s persistent micro-management methods as a producer on *2001* often led to blockages and a slow workflow. Such management, deliberately obscuring his productions from MGM and delaying decision

making, contributed to MGM's perilous financial state by the end of the 1960s. *Variety* reported on this in December 1967:

The reason Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer failed to pay off any of its outstanding debt during the course of the past fiscal year, prexy Robert H. O'Brien said last week, is that the company has experienced "a growth in inventory without a corresponding payoff of inventory". Or, putting it more specifically, O'Brien conceded that his debt reduction prediction about a year-and-a-half ago had been "based on the premise that "Space Odyssey" would be in release". (Anon. 1967g: 5)

The impact on the commercial success of *2001* was marginal, however, with the film becoming a huge box office hit. In part, this was probably down to word of mouth, critical attention (which was far more positive than some scholars, such as James Naremore (2007: 19-20) suggest), the debate of 'what the film means' (what *Variety* called the 'coffee cup debate' (Anon. 1968q: 29)), and the way it resonated with the fifteen to twenty-five demographic (Palmer 2006: 14). All of this was an 'unintended promotion that quickly outstripped the more conventional advertising campaign plotted by MGM' (14).

This is not to suggest that Kubrick's lack of cooperation over publicity was out of an attempt to sabotage MGM's marketing plans, but rather out of a desire to centralise absolute control of his productions with himself. Kubrick may not have gained full control of the publicity and exploitation of *2001* (initially at least), but neither did MGM and they had to deny press rumours of a power struggle over the publicity of *2001* (Anon. 1968p: 7). Kubrick had developed for himself a sphere of influence through this process of secrecy and withholding information because MGM had little room for manoeuvre without Kubrick's cooperation. Polaris's activities in setting up merchandising tie-ins, often targeted at children, may also have initially steered the publicity for *2001*, given this was at times the only information MGM had to go on. By the end of the decade, Kubrick had fashioned himself considerable power as an independent producer with a film that eventually expanded beyond this family demographic to become a major hit with the growing youth audience. With the film having made over \$20 million by 1973 (Sklar 1988: 118), Kubrick had seemingly established the Kubrick brand as a commercially viable and prestigious label heading into a period of economic uncertainty for Hollywood.

## Chapter Five:

### Producing A Kubrick Feature in the New Hollywood 1968-1980

The previous chapter examined how Kubrick's growth as an independent producer in the 1960s was in large part because of the consolidation of control of publicity and his own image into his Polaris Productions. It also established that Kubrick's producing methods on *2001* had led to the project running significantly over budget (by approximately \$5 million) and over schedule (it was originally to be completed by October 1966, but was finally released in April 1968). Kubrick's producing methods even contributed to one of Hollywood's most important studios missing its yearly income targets several years in a row (Anon. 1967g: 5). It is arguable that his inability to get projects into production in the immediate wake of *2001* may have been as a result of his producing methods and insistence on absolute control, which frustrated the work process as he centralised the decision making process with himself. This is not to say Kubrick was dictatorial, as he certainly did collaborate, but ultimately he was the person in charge who had to make every decision (McAvoy 2015: 290). As Robert Kolker argues, 'control was the way Kubrick survived as a completely independent filmmaker' (2006: 4). Kubrick's battle to obtain full authority over his productions, from development through to publicity and distribution, led to such a frustrated process on the publicity campaign for *2001*. Its initial marketing campaign was eventually relaunched through a close collaboration between Kubrick and publicist Mike Kaplan. Kaplan will be a major character in this chapter, recruited by Kubrick from MGM to become his new vice-president of Polaris. In that role, Kaplan developed 'brand Kubrick', an image that did as much to cement Kubrick's authority over his productions as did any contract.

Jan Harlan, Kubrick's executive producer from *Barry Lyndon* through to *Eyes Wide Shut*, is also an important character in both this chapter and Chapter Six. Harlan would become Kubrick's de-facto co-producer (he was credited as executive producer), overseeing the logistical operations of each Kubrick production from the 1970s onwards. Harlan has remarked about how the role of producer on the films was 'an automatic process. That's true in every film' (Appendix II). What he is referring to are

the routine administrative processes that take place during production, ranging from the writing of daily progress reports to the logistical organisation of the crew on location. Harlan reported directly back to Kubrick, with Kubrick retaining overall authority for every aspect of the business and creative functions of his productions (Appendix II).

Kubrick had fashioned himself into the role of a super-producer by the 1970s and began exhibiting an image akin to that of Kirk Douglas in the late 1950s (see Chapter Three) of a studio executive rather than the traditional, romantic notion of a director. Jeremy Bernstein profiled Kubrick in 1966 and described him as sitting at a desk in an office, surrounded by letters that needed signing, receiving phone calls from around the world, and sending off cables (Bernstein in Phillips 2002: 38-39). In addition, profiles of him, such as Bernstein's *New Yorker* piece, or an in-depth interview with Joseph Gelmis for his *The Film Director as Superstar* (1970) further elevated Kubrick's status and image within the industry.

It is the received opinion that following *2001* Kubrick was at the zenith of his filmmaking power, particularly once he entered the working relationship with Warner Bros. in 1970 that would sustain him for the remainder of his career. His power and influence as a producer coincided with the advent of the New Hollywood, with *2001* released at a time that saw films like *Bonnie and Clyde* (1967) and *The Graduate* (1967) succeeding at the box office. Arguably, Kubrick would profoundly influence the latter half of the New Hollywood, with the rise of the so-called 'movie-brats' (Pye and Myles 1979): the 'film school generation' of Steven Spielberg, George Lucas, Francis Ford Coppola, Paul Schrader, Martin Scorsese, and John Milius (Pye and Myles 1979: 7-11). Thomas Elsaesser describes Kubrick's position in the 1970s as being unique in that, not only was he categorisable as being a Hollywood Renaissance auteur, but more importantly that he,

had an inordinate influence not so much on the first New Hollywood as on the second, insofar as each of his films from *Dr Strangelove* (1964) and *2001: A Space Odyssey* (1968) onwards was a kind of prototype (of the science fiction film, of ultraviolence, of the costume film, the horror film) that others could adapt into a blockbuster formula. (Elsaesser 2004: 54)

While Elsaesser might view Kubrick as what he terms a 'survivor' of the early New Hollywood, in that his 'work remained very consistently "auteurist" [...] with a steady output of films' (2004: 54), Kubrick, like other independent producers active in 1970s

Hollywood, found filmmaking a struggle. Following *2001*, he failed on more than one occasion to get his long-planned *Napoleon* into development, while other projects were mooted, including an adaptation of Arthur Schnitzler's *Traumnovelle* (1926). These projects did not come to fruition and in fact his output was not as steady as Elsaesser suggests. Production output became increasingly protracted due to a combination of Kubrick's own working processes (the need to produce high quality and completely controlled product; sacrificing large crews in order to allow for a longer shooting schedule) and industrial factors (rival projects; a box office becoming dominated by high-concept blockbusters). These issues will be picked up in Chapter Six. This chapter will examine the way Kubrick looked to further consolidate his power as an independent producer with legal authority over his productions by focusing on the idea of the Kubrick brand. The chapter will look at how Kubrick's productions were produced within the industrial contexts of the conglomerisation of Hollywood, the growing dominance of Warner Bros., and a fast changing demographic in the USA.

### **Industrial Contexts: Kubrick, Warner Bros. and Absolute Control**

On 22 July 1966, Roger Caras wrote a letter to Stanley Kubrick to tell him of a seismic industrial change he had heard was about to take place in Hollywood: United Artists were to be taken over by the conglomerate corporation Consolidated Food (the deal with Consolidated fell through and UA eventually merged with Transamerica Corporation in 1967 (Balio 1987: 304-305)). Caras noted what this meant for the former independent company:

[The takeover] puts UA in the enviable position of being free of banks. Production can now be financed by the parent company much as it is in the Gulf-Western and Paramount set-up. The feeling around town is that this must be the trend within the industry. There are mixed emotions as to whether it is all rosy. Some people feel that there will be indifference to Show Business norms by any company whose principal concerns are ball bearings and not art. (Caras 1966g)

Caras was aware of the industrial significance of the takeover and concluded as much to Kubrick: 'It is interesting, none the less, and could represent a major revolution within the industry' (Caras 1966g). Caras was not wrong and over the next few years the major Hollywood studios were taken over by various conglomerate giants and became subsidiaries within vast media empires. Perhaps reacting to the industrial changes,

Kubrick made a bold move, when in February 1968 he purchased five thousand shares of MGM stock, at an investment of \$205,000 (Anon. 1968c: 4). Kubrick's purchase was made from a position of confidence at the anticipated success of *2001* and the impact this would have on MGM stock prices (Anon. 1968b: 7). However, MGM was a struggling company by 1968 and Kubrick's investment must be seen in this context. Certainly, MGM was not without other 'celebrity' stockholders, including Carlo Ponti, producer of the likes of *Doctor Zhivago* (1965). But Kubrick's investment was noticeable for the amount he had purchased (it would equate to approximately \$1.5 million at today's prices). *Variety* reported one source saying that it equated to a vote of confidence ten times over by Kubrick in his own picture (Anon. 1968c: 4).

Prior to the purchase of the shares, Kubrick had been an initiator of a series of adverts supporting MGM's management, which had found itself in a battle with Philip Levin, an MGM majority stakeholder since February 1965 (Anon. 1967b: 3). Levin sought an injunction against MGM to stop members of the board soliciting 'proxies' to vote on his behalf in the election of directors to the board (3). Levin, along with several other shareholders, tried to oust MGM president, Robert O'Brien, from his position, along with other management directors. Kubrick persuaded sixty-three other producers and directors, including John Frankenheimer and David Lean, to sign the adverts, which were taken out in *Variety*, *New York Times*, and the *Wall Street Journal* in January 1967 and claimed that O'Brien was 'orientated toward as much quality in film-making as is consistent with commercialism' (3). Appreciating the creative and business authority O'Brien had given him during the production of *2001*, Kubrick was motivated to take out the advert of support for MGM and its management because he believed 'something should be done in the current situation to demonstrate the esteem in which O'Brien is held by creative people who have worked with him' (3). It likely also stemmed from the fact that MGM retained a fifty per cent share in *2001*, along with perpetual distribution rights (Sklar 1988: 118). Levin was infuriated by the adverts and made a complaint to the Securities & Exchange Commission (Anon. 1967b: 3). He was determined to change the management of MGM and had formed a committee titled the MGM Stockholders' Committee for Better Management, setting out an eight-point plan for the company's future (Anon. 1967a: 4). This included the establishment of a subsidiary, MGM Telefilms, to take over control of MGM's feature films for distribution on

television (4). Though Levin was ultimately not granted the injunction he wanted on the adverts, nor did he manage to usurp O'Brien (though, O'Brien was later forced to resign in January 1969 (Anon. 1969e: 46)), he was victorious in his efforts in the shareholder vote and elected his desired director candidates (Markham 2006: 272).

The damage inflicted on MGM was the beginning of the end for the ailing company, with a takeover initiated by Kirk Kerkorian in July 1968 (Barmash 2003: 150). Kubrick may, however, have had ulterior motivations in supporting O'Brien and his management team, as seen by his decision to buy shares. His support of the MGM management team may not have been as a result of genuine admiration in their leadership, but rather an attempt to further solidify his control and power. Shortly before Kubrick acquired the MGM shares, the company's stock had declined by more than \$25 a share. Such drastic financial downturn was as a result of 'the company's current cash and earning status, and its prospects for the future in the light of a possible takeover by board member Edgar Bronfman and/or Time Inc.' (Gold 1968: 3). And as mentioned above, Kubrick had contributed to MGM's woes with the over-budgeted and overscheduled *2001*. By the end of 1968, Kubrick could not even get MGM to green light his next project, *Napoleon*. Despite supposedly being at the heights of his producing powers, he still found obtaining financing difficult. Kubrick's political manoeuvres in supporting the MGM management had not paid off. Such politicking would occur again during his early years at Warner Bros., as shall be examined below.

*Variety* reported in July 1968 that *Napoleon* would be Kubrick's next project, which he would produce, direct and write, with shooting to commence in early 1969 (Anon. 1968f: 11). The announcement created a buzz within the global film industry, with many European countries hoping to encourage Kubrick to produce the picture in their country (Anon. 1968g: 62). Kubrick plunged into the research for the film, contracting Professor Felix Markham as the principal historical advisor on the project in autumn 1968 (Anon. 1968h: 24). *Napoleon* was also the first official work conducted by Jan Harlan for Kubrick. He'd been brought on to undertake research in Zurich and Germany to gather picture material, before Kubrick asked him to join him for a further year in Romania. Kubrick had just arranged a principle deal to use the Romanian cavalry in the film to depict Napoleon's first Italian and Russian campaign (Appendix II).

Just as he believed that there had never been a truly great science fiction film prior to his making of *2001*, so Kubrick believed, with all ‘apologies and respects’, that there had never been a great historical film (Strick and Houston 1972: 66). Kubrick included Abel Gance’s *Napoleon* (1927) in his judgement of bad historical films. Napoleon and the Napoleonic wars had attracted numerous directors since the earliest days of cinema. Alongside Gance’s silent epic, there were silent films about Horatio Nelson (*Nelson* (Maurice Elvey 1918; Walter Summers 1926); *Waterloo* (Karl Grune, 1929), and *The Black Hussar* (1932)). Many German films of the 1920s and 1930s depicted successes over the Napoleonic armies, such as *The Higher Command/Der höhere Befehl* (1935), part of a growing patriotic German national identity. This culminated in *Kolberg* (1945), directed by Veit Harlan (uncle of Jan Harlan and Christiane Kubrick) about a German town besieged by French troops. After World War Two, however, there were fewer films about Napoleon, with one or two exceptions. It was not until the mid-1960s that there was a renewed interest off the back of Sergei Bondarchuk’s quartet of Russian made *War and Peace* (1966-67) films, the totality of which won the Academy Award for Best Foreign Language Film in 1969.

But despite the critical success of Bondarchuk’s *War and Peace*, MGM backed out of their deal with Kubrick by the end of 1968, citing that they were involved in ‘too many ultra-high budget previous commitments’ (Anon. 1970a: 21). Kubrick then turned the project over to United Artists, who after initial support also turned the project down. The interest in Napoleon was growing apace and two other rival films on the life of the emperor were announced – one by Warner Bros. to be directed by Bryan Forbes, and the other to be produced by Dino De Laurentiis and directed by Sergei Bondarchuk for Paramount (Anon. 1969c: 26). As the trades noted, Kubrick’s project was now in direct competition with De Laurentiis’s *Waterloo* (1970) (Anon. 1968f: 11). *Waterloo* had been in development hell since 1966, but finally went into production in the spring of 1969 with an initial budget of \$25 million (Werba 1969: 33). The film became an increasingly difficult cause of Kubrick’s inability to get his own *Napoleon* project off the ground. By the late 1960s, there was an increase in so-called ‘rival projects’ – ‘competitive film projects (same title or themes) separately proclaimed by two or more producers’ (Anon. 1969d: 46). This problem was acutely the case for Napoleonic pictures. In fact, given the attention by Hollywood film producers following *War and*



*Peace*, an Italian producer of 'sex adventures' decided to exploit the theme with *Napoleon and Sexy Susan* (Anon. 1969c: 26).

The fate of Kubrick's project was now subject to the whims of Hollywood's conglomeration. In October 1969, Kirk Kerkorian took a controlling percentage of MGM shares and installed James T. Aubrey as the company's president following an aggressive takeover during the summer (Anon. 1969a: 5). Kerkorian was a businessman with a variety of properties, including hotels and casinos in Las Vegas (5). Immediately following his acquisition of MGM, Kerkorian commenced a restructure of the company, resulting in large cuts and the selling off of real estate. MGM had a deficit of close to \$15 million by the end of 1969 (Foley 1969: 4). The deficit meant the need for drastic financial cutbacks, which production chief James Aubrey implemented ruthlessly throughout Christmas 1969, including making redundant over thirty-five per cent of the company's domestic payroll and the dismissal of long-term executives, including Dan Terrell (Anon. 1969b: 6). It also meant cancelling numerous high-budget productions, with films such as *She Loves Me*, with Julie Andrews, being dropped, and others, such as an adaptation of Saul Bellow's *Adventures of Augie March* (1953) halted for 'budget revisions' (Foley 1969: 4). Over twenty big-budget projects were abandoned (4).

Under Kerkorian and Aubrey MGM now pursued a new production strategy, which focused on low-to-mid budget films geared toward the new youth audience. Aubrey in a press statement cited the success of the likes of *Easy Rider* (1969), made on a shoestring budget of \$400,000, but grossing over \$60 million (Tarbox 1969: 5). Aubrey wanted films that were made for audiences of the 18-25 demographic (Foley 1969: 4). The projected \$11 million budget of *Napoleon*, along with the now notoriously slow working methods of Kubrick following the four year production of *2001*, meant that the project was becoming commercially unviable in the industrial climate. It was not just MGM that was suffering, though it certainly was hurting the most financially. The other big studios were encountering losses in the millions and cancelling projects in the tens, including Twentieth Century Fox, Paramount and Warner Bros., while United Artists lost \$35million throughout 1970 (Foley 1969: 4). Kubrick turned to UA for funding for *Napoleon* in early 1970, but they too refused. Perhaps sensing both the project's unviable potential at the box office, as well as the

need to sacrifice significant artistic and business powers in any deal, Kubrick quietly put *Napoleon* on hold.

Instead, it was announced in February 1970 that Kubrick had struck a deal with Warner Bros.' John Calley to 'write, produce and direct the film version of Anthony Burgess's *A Clockwork Orange*. Pic is scheduled to start this summer in Britain and will presumably be completed before his much protracted *Napoleon* project' (Anon. 1970b: 22). Despite the deal with Warner Bros., Kubrick continued to pursue research into *Napoleon* simultaneously with the development of *A Clockwork Orange*. The trades reported that *Napoleon* would be filmed in either 1971 or 1972 after the completion of *A Clockwork Orange* (Anon. 1970c: 22). This never occurred, however, with Kubrick instead signing to Warner Bros. to produce a second picture: an adaptation of Arthur Schnitzler's *Traumnovelle*, scheduled to start shooting in autumn 1971 (Anon. 1971e: 3).

The evolution of Warner Bros. in the latter half of the century was rapid, the catalyst for change coming in the late 1960s during the period of conglomerisation. Warner Bros. also underwent two takeovers by the end of the decade. The company was still headed by Jack L. Warner in 1966 and he steered it through turbulent economic waters. He implemented a series of executive promotions in the spring of 1966 (Anon. 1966a: W1), before selling his shares in the company to Seven Arts Productions; a total of 1,573,861 at a price of \$20 per share (Anon. 1966b: 5). Following the sale of his stock, Warner took a back seat, giving up the role of president and chief executive to Ben Kalmenson, and instead taking up the newly created position of Chairman of the Board, thereby retaining executive producing powers (Anon. 1966b: 5). Warner's final year with the company was one of intense activity, putting into production a number of financially successful and critically praised pictures in 1967, which the industry declared 'the year of Warner Bros.-Seven Arts' (Anon. 1968e: 7). Films such as *Bonnie and Clyde*, *Cool Hand Luke* (1967) and *Reflections in a Golden Eye* (1967) led *Variety* to state that 'more than any other major studio, it was Warner Bros. – under the leadership of 74-year-old Jack Warner – which took the risks' (Anon. 1968e: 7). By mid-1967, Seven Arts had completed their acquisition of Warner Bros. and Eliot Hyman was appointed board chairman and his son Kenneth Hyman executive vice-

president in charge of worldwide production of the newly named Warner Bros.-Seven Arts Ltd (Anon. 1967e: 3).

In 1969, however, Steve Ross's Kinney National Company, aided by Ted Ashley, bought out Warner Bros. from Seven Arts. Warner Bros.-Seven Arts, despite initial success at the box office, had soon found itself struggling financially (DiOrio and Natale 2002: 51). Following the acquisition by Kinney, Ross installed Ashley as the Warner Bros. CEO, a position he held until 1981 (DiOrio and Natale 2002: 51). Ashley continued the risk-taking approach that Jack Warner had taken during 1967 and played 'a major role in greenlighting controversial and socially relevant projects' (51). Producer-director John Boorman described working at Warner Bros. under Ashley as being a 'tremendously innovative and exciting period, when the prevailing policy at the studio was to support the film directors' visions, and Warner Bros. was clearly leading the way' (51).

There has been some speculation about the deal between Kubrick and Warner Bros., but nothing truly concrete in what the deal specified. The two biographies on Kubrick rush over the issue: John Baxter merely states that it was a three-picture deal that gave Kubrick complete control (1998: 245-246), while Vincent LoBrutto fails even to mention the deal. But there are hints in production correspondence as to the nature of Kubrick's relationship with Warner Bros., and we can also deduce why Kubrick chose to produce *A Clockwork Orange* when he did given the industrial contexts of both Warner Bros. and Hollywood. An interoffice memo from Warner Bros.'s Clive Parsons to Mike Baumohl (Warner Bros. European Publicity Director) in early 1970 outlines the nature of the relationship between Kubrick and the company, at least with regards to *A Clockwork Orange*:

The underlying principle in the case of this picture is that the key creative and business decisions are made by Kubrick (after consultation with [Ted] Ashley and [John] Calley). Kubrick agrees to give Warner Bros. representatives reasonable access to sets and locations with a view to keeping them advised with respect to the progress of production and decisions being made in connection therewith. Accordingly, the Kubrick contract is very different from our normal production/distribution arrangement and I would suggest that you might like to check with me about any specific points which come up, before approaching Kubrick. (Parsons 1970)

This memo is remarkably explicit in explaining the nature of the relationship between Kubrick and Warner Bros. and there are several key points in the memo beyond the

initial announcement that Kubrick made key creative and business decisions. Firstly, this is bracketed with the qualification that Kubrick's decisions had to flow from consultations with Warner Bros. executives Ted Ashley and John Calley. Both executives kept on top of what was happening throughout the production of *A Clockwork Orange*, as well as remaining in constant dialogue with Kubrick's team over the film's promotion and distribution. They repeatedly flew out to London to hold meetings with Kubrick or to view footage. Dan Stern, the advertising and publicity vice-president, travelled to London in December 1970 (Anon. 1970e: 5), while Ted Ashley, along with John Calley, personally led an echelon of Warner Bros. executives to London in January 1971 to hold meetings with Kubrick and other directors, including Ken Russell who was working on *The Devils* (1971) and John Boorman who was directing *Deliverance* (1972) (Anon. 1971a: 6).

Secondly, the memo states that Kubrick had to provide 'reasonable access' to all production decisions, a not altogether unfair request given that Warner Bros. were providing full financial backing. Again, the repeated visits by Warner Bros. executives to London to meet with Kubrick back up this point. And thirdly, the memo confirms that the relationship with Kubrick was 'very different from our normal production/distribution arrangement' (Parsons 1970). John Calley had personally flown out to London to meet with Kubrick and negotiate the terms of his next feature. This in itself was unusual, given that international production was the responsibility of the director of foreign productions, George Ornstein. Ornstein resigned several days after the contract had been struck with Kubrick, and was replaced by Danton Rissner (Anon. 1970d: 4). Kubrick was able to utilise the new management of Ashley-Calley to his advantage, obtaining control over every facet of his production, right through to promotion and distribution. Of course, there were checks and balances, as suggested by the constant meetings and conferences held in London by Warner Bros. executives throughout 1970 and 1971. Jan Harlan further outlines this relationship with Warner Bros.:

He'd say to them [Warner Bros.], look I'm going to film this, are you interested. And they'd say yes, always. Sure, you want to make this film, fine. Ok, I mean, let us see what it is, what's the budget, who is going to be in it. Of course they're not saying do whatever you want, no way, but once they made a deal with him, they would never interfere. (Appendix II)

Kubrick approached Warner Bros. with the intent of gaining their backing for *Napoleon*. But it was a project that would presumably not have found favour with Ted Ashley and John Calley. As Harlan suggests above, Warner Bros. did not allow Kubrick outright to do whatever project he wanted; they had to see and approve the project first.

Ted Ashley and John Calley implemented a series of new policies shortly after being appointed by Steve Ross. This included making cuts of \$5 million and a move toward smaller budgeted films (Verrill 1970: 15). *Napoleon* did not align with the new production motives of Warner Bros., a project that required vast amounts of research and development. Ashley, in a meeting with Kinney shareholders, announced that Warner Bros. were implementing 'strict pre-production cost controls, not only to pear budgets down but to minimize eventual losses if the project were to be abandoned' (Verrill 1970: 15). The company was now pursuing a policy of low-budget (on average, no more than \$1.7 million (Verrill 1970: 15)), fast turnaround, and often controversial youth films, following on from the recent industry successes of *Easy Rider*, *Bonnie and Clyde*, and *The Graduate*. Ashley and Calley had initiated films such as *THX 1138* (1971), *Woodstock* (1970), *Stop* (1970), *The Devils*, *Deliverance*, *Klute* (1971) and *Dirty Harry* (1971), as well as eventually releasing *Performance* (1970), a project instigated prior to the Kinney takeover of Warner Bros., and *Death in Venice* (1971). A number of these features received X-ratings in the USA, including *Stop* and *The Devils*, and contained considerable violence, sex and taboo subjects. The new MPAA ratings system was introduced in 1968, replacing the old Production Code. But the new system of classification created uncertainty around boundaries and presented what Richard Maltby calls 'the commercial viability of the "X" category' that became a marketing device for studios (2003: 177-78). The new system allowed the 'majors to produce and distribute the kind of overtly sensationalist material they had previously left to independents like AIP' (179). Many of the X-rated features were proving to be box office hits, and even Academy Award winners (*Midnight Cowboy* (1969) was awarded Best Picture in 1969).<sup>20</sup>

The youth-oriented market was what interested Warner Bros., particularly after *Woodstock* achieved a domestic gross of \$14 million by January 1971, leading Steve

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<sup>20</sup> For further reading on the introduction of the MPAA rating system, see Maltby (2003: 177-181) and Cook (2000: 70-71).

Ross to announce in an annual Kinney report that *Woodstock* was an example of the 'kind of broad-based product that WB will concentrate upon in future' (Anon. 1971b: 5). In line with Ashley's new policy direction, the films were often filmed on location, usually in Europe. Calley had outlined this approach in an interview with *Variety* in September 1970, saying, 'I think feature films, since they are being made one time only, are best made off the lot on the actual locations. It seems to work out better creatively' (Anon. 1970f: 4). It also worked out better for Warner Bros. who were arranging stage rental deals for television production (Verrill 1970: 15).

*A Clockwork Orange* aligned exactly with the new policy direction and industrial contexts of Warner Bros. It was a low-budget, youth-oriented, controversial feature that could be X-rated. Whether Kubrick had been encouraged toward the project by Warner Bros., who themselves were not enthused by *Napoleon*, is debatable. After all, Jan Harlan has said that, 'Warner Bros. had great benefits, not financially, but from the prestige of having this man on their books. And they didn't want to lose him, ever again' (Harlan 2016). It may have been that, in return for directing a quick, low-budget youth picture, Warner Bros. would allow Kubrick to pursue a more personal project in future. The film was produced quickly with an eye to the youth audience and the intention of gaining as big a box office draw as possible (this will be explored below with regards to Mike Kaplan and brand Kubrick), thereby perhaps allowing Kubrick to sway Warner Bros. towards financing *Napoleon* in the future.

### **Producing *A Clockwork Orange***

The policy direction being pursued by Ashley and Calley ultimately had an impact on the way Kubrick produced *A Clockwork Orange*. He utilised a small crew and began to draw upon the same people again and again, as well as his own family members. For instance, Jan Harlan was given a permanent position at Kubrick's Hawk Films, acting as the Assistant to the Producer on *A Clockwork Orange*. Harlan was the brother of Kubrick's wife, Christiane, and had developed a close relationship with Kubrick while visiting him on the set of *2001* and conducting research for *Napoleon*. Previously, Harlan had worked for a Zurich based company in organisation and business planning, skills Kubrick viewed as being beneficial to Hawk Films and so offered him a permanent position in 1969. Harlan relocated to St. Albans shortly afterward (Appendix

II). Harlan became a close adviser to Kubrick and was ‘put in charge of business matters [...] and was the link between Kubrick and the outside world for all financial and legal affairs’ (Phillips and Hill 2002: 143). The senior team of Harlan, Mike Kaplan and associate producer Bernard Williams (who worked on *A Clockwork Orange* and *Barry Lyndon*) seemingly contributed to a more streamlined method of producing.<sup>21</sup> They divided the non-artistic producing responsibilities of Kubrick among them, but still passed all decisions through Kubrick himself (Appendix II). From *A Clockwork Orange* onward Kubrick would regularly employ close family members in senior positions on his productions, as well as working with the same crew members, meaning that ‘many of the relationships and organisational hierarchies were already established’ (McAvoy 2015: 294). At the centre of this operation was Harlan. Pragmatic in his approach, Harlan’s job was to transform ideas that had been expressed to him by Kubrick into logistical reality. He also arranged contracts and permissions for location shooting, for the rental of props, and other equipment: ‘I had nothing to do with what you see on the screen. Only to do with what I was supposed to get, that he wanted. I was a member of the crew. Ok, I had signature power, but I was a member of the crew, and my job was to [...] to do what was wanted’ (Appendix II). Harlan was also appointed the director of Hawk Films and took care of the day-to-day running of Kubrick’s production companies, along with the likes of accountant John Trehy (Trehy 1973). He would sign off requisition orders and other expenses, as well as negotiate deals with crew and actors (Harlan 1975).

Production on *A Clockwork Orange* commenced on Monday 14 September 1970, six days after the officially scheduled start date of 7 September. This was due to Kubrick contracting mumps and being too unwell to work. The crew was put on standby throughout the week of 7 September, accruing no additional overtime, and the six lost days were claimed on the production’s insurance (Williams 1970a). The shoot was scheduled to last fifty-four days, but time was lost drastically throughout the early weeks of the production in September and October. The daily progress reports compiled

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<sup>21</sup> Bernard Williams (1942-2015) had extensive experience as a production manager prior to working with Kubrick, including on thirteen episodes of the television series *The Prisoner* (1967-68) and on the films *Battle of Britain* (1969) and *Brotherly Love/Country Dance* (1970). He went on to have a successful career as a producer on Hollywood productions such as *Manhunter* (1986), *Star Trek: Generations* (1994), and *Daredevil* (2003)

by associate producer Bernard Williams reveal Kubrick's slow methods of producing and directing. For instance, on 24 September 1970, the crew moved to Nettlefold Hall, West Norwood to shoot the scene in which Alex is presented to the press following his successful Ludovico treatment. The scene required the presence of ten principal actors (including Malcolm McDowell, Michael Bates and Godfrey Quigley) as well as forty-one extras. Only eleven days into the shoot, and the production was already one and a half days over schedule due to bad weather and 'delicate preparation and rehearsal' for the Ludovico treatment sequence (Williams 1970b). The 24 September saw only two minutes and ten seconds of footage shot, despite the crew being on location for over ten hours and not dismissed until ten o'clock at night (Williams 1970c). The following day, 25 September, the crew returned to Nettlefold Hall to complete the scene, with a crew call of eight o'clock in the morning. Again, ten principal actors were present, but only thirty-eight extras were called. Staggeringly, only five minutes and forty-two seconds of footage was filmed, despite the crew not being dismissed until three minutes past midnight, being present on set for over sixteen hours. In total, Kubrick used twenty-six hours on one scene, capturing a total of seven minutes and fifty-one seconds of footage, with thirty-five set-ups across the two days (Williams 1970d). This now left the production two days over schedule and the crew had to work an additional day on 26 September (Williams 1970d).

This became a common occurrence throughout the production, leading to Kubrick dropping whole scenes (such as scenes forty-three and forty-four, to take place in the lobby of Alex's flat block following his successful Ludovico treatment (Kubrick 1970)) and a persistent rescheduling of the shoot in an attempt to keep to schedule. By the end of principal photography in February 1971 the production was sixty-two days over schedule. Kubrick's slow work rate on set, often only completing two or three set-ups a day (Williams 1970e), meant that he needed to save money in order to give him the time he needed. Williams reports that by the end of October Kubrick was looking for an alternative location for a scene in a pasta parlour that would allow them to shoot on a weekday, 'thus saving additional expenditure on a premium weekend day'



(Williams 1970f). The scene was eventually dropped in November 1970 (Williams 1970i).<sup>22</sup>

This work rate would be the pattern for Kubrick throughout his time with Warner Bros. and reflected one of the key ways in which Kubrick's productions differed from others on Warner Bros. roster. Given how over schedule Kubrick was with *A Clockwork Orange*, a film that was shot quickly compared with his other productions, it is surprising that the shooting schedule for *Barry Lyndon* was so optimistic. *Barry Lyndon* required much more logistical planning, with regular production meetings about what the heads of department termed their 'key worries of filming' (Anon. 1973a), including the numerous locations and costumes. But the shooting schedule put together by Bernard Williams in collaboration with Kubrick and Jan Harlan advised that the production would begin on 17 September 1973 (it had been envisioned that filming would commence in the summer, but was put back due to preproduction logistics) and finish on 18 December 1973. This was wholly inaccurate, with production not finishing until the summer of 1974, with post-production pick up shots carrying on after this.

In contrast to the shooting schedule of *A Clockwork Orange*, other similar budgeted Warner Bros. fare, such as *Deliverance* (a production of just under \$2 million), had much faster turnarounds. John Boorman commenced shooting of *Deliverance* on location on 17 May 1971 and had wrapped by the beginning of September, just under four months, compared to *Clockwork's* nearly seven months, and this in spite of filming on difficult rural locations in Georgia throughout (Anon. 1971c: 20). And yet, despite their differing shooting schedules, both films came in at roughly the same budget. In fact, Kubrick was hailed as a 'hero' by executives at a Warner Communication's annual meeting in New York in 1972 for 'combining aesthetics with fiscal responsibility' (Anon. 1972a: 4). Certainly, he developed producing methods that ensured costs were kept to a minimum, allowing him the luxury of time, a method stressed by Jan Harlan, saying, 'if you shoot so long, you have to have a small crew, otherwise you go bust' (Harlan 2016). The total crew employed at various stages on *A*

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<sup>22</sup> In Burgess's book, Alex takes two girls to a pasta parlour to 'let them fill their innocent young listos on spaghetti and sausages' (Burgess 1962: 37). In Kubrick's film, these are the two girls Alex meets in the record shop.

*Clockwork Orange* totalled approximately fifty, in contrast to *Deliverance*, which had just over seventy, roughly the average for small-budgeted Warner Bros. productions, including *Dirty Harry* and *The Exorcist II: The Heretic* (1977) (based on the credits of the film).

Throughout the production of *A Clockwork Orange* and through into post-production and distribution, the aim was to ensure continued fiscal responsibility while maximising the commercial viability of the film and its potential box office gross. This was in line with the production policy of Warner Bros. and marked a change compared to the excesses of *2001*. Harlan has remarked how Warner Bros. insisted there would be 'severe penalties' should Kubrick have gone over budget on any of his productions (Appendix II). Harlan does not specify what these penalties were, but does talk about how Kubrick kept costs down by utilising small crews. At the same time Kubrick, along with Harlan and Williams, maintained a tight rein over production expenses, with regular unit memos being issued to the crew's Heads of Department explaining the procurement processes Kubrick had put in place, with 'no purchases or orders of any kind to be made without the approval of Stanley Kubrick' (Williams 1970g). Heads of Department had to complete purchase requisition forms, providing 'full details of the good, supplier's name and address, purchase or rental price, discount if applicable and when required' (Williams 1970g). Approvals pertained not just to large cost items, but also petty cash. Unit memos were issued on a weekly basis, outlining the strict procedures and processes Kubrick wanted on the production, and often dealt with issues of expense, ranging from the production not covering mileage costs of crew members using their own car, to taxi fares being coverable only when ordered by Hawk Films for explicit purposes. Some of the production policies were overly didactic, such as not viewing 1st January 1971 as a holiday and therefore any crewmember wanting to take the day off would see a deduction in their salary of one-fifth (Williams 1970h). The key to Kubrick's producing methods in the 1970s was to always aim to save money. His productions had extensive development and preproduction to ensure they were logistically well organised, with the team of Jan Harlan, Bernard Williams and Brian Cook instrumental in this. The result, as Harlan as suggested, was a small crew with a longer shooting schedule compared to other productions (Appendix II).

Kubrick kept a watchful eye over every receipt that came into the production office (evident in the Stanley Kubrick Archive with the number of receipts and invoices that were annotated by Kubrick) and would challenge any costs he saw as unfair or dubious. Take how Hawk Films commissioned a company called Abacus to inspect the *A Clockwork Orange* print following issues with Kodak. It is interesting briefly to examine the correspondence that Kubrick engaged in with company chairman, John Mackey, and the technician Bryan Loftus (who had worked as a special effects technician on *2001: A Space Odyssey*) and how it demonstrates Kubrick's micro-management style, as well as his keen business acumen. Upon receiving the invoice for the work done by Abacus, Kubrick immediately responded by suggesting he felt that the price of £1450 was inordinately expensive. Loftus had spent 101 hours inspecting the *A Clockwork Orange* print and another 44 hours operating the film printer. The company's work rate was normally priced at £10 per hour, resulting in the charge of £1450. Following Kubrick's dismay, Mackey tried to compromise, by lowering the price per hour to £7 for the 101 hours Loftus spent inspecting the print (Mackey 1971). Kubrick, however, wanted to know what exactly he was paying for:

I would be extremely grateful if you would indicate how you spent this 101 hours. I know that several days were spent at Humphries, but 101 hours represents 2 ½ solid weeks of work doing other things than printing [...] I hope that you can understand that even the reduced bill of £1,015 for two marry-ups and 27 wedges is more in keeping with the *2001* budget than the *A Clockwork Orange* budget. (Kubrick 1971a)

What we can see in this correspondence is, firstly, how Kubrick was attempting to receive a discount and succeeded, but secondly, how he was concerned about the budget of the film and ensuring it fit in with the low-budget policy of Ashley and Calley. Warner Bros., in the early years of the Kinney takeover, was extremely keen on ensuring low-budgets, impacting on the creative and business decisions of its producers and directors. John Boorman felt this acutely on *Deliverance*, having to sacrifice any use of a score because 'Warners didn't have much confidence in the film and said they wouldn't make the film unless I cut the budget' (McGrath 2015: 33). Similarly, Kubrick remarked to Loftus that he would have 'great trouble in trying to explain this [the invoice price] to Warner Bros.' (Kubrick 1971a). Kubrick perhaps sensed the unusual privilege he had been gifted at Warner Bros. in being given such control and freedom and therefore wanted to avoid unnecessary expense and an out of control budget that

could lead to the loss of authority he had long sought. Fiscal responsibility was therefore utmost. And, as *A Clockwork Orange* moved into post-production, so was the commercial potential of both *Clockwork* and of the Kubrick brand.

### **Brand Kubrick**

This section will explore how Polaris Productions, under the vice presidency of Mike Kaplan, allowed Kubrick to further cement his authority as an independent producer over both the publicity of his films *and* their distribution. At the same time, Kaplan was instrumental in developing ‘brand Kubrick’, a central promotional device in the selling of Kubrick’s films from the 1970s onwards.

Mike Kaplan was exactly the kind of young, enthusiastic and innovative talent that Kubrick wanted working for him. He had graduated with a Bachelor of Arts degree from the University of Rhode Island in 1964, becoming the associate editor of the *Independent Film Journal* and later joining the publicity department as the trade press contact for American International Pictures (Anon. 1965e: 10). MGM executive Dan Terrell decided to hire Kaplan as MGM’s trade press contact in July 1965 and soon promoted him to the role of newspaper and syndicate contact for MGM (Anon. 1967f: 3), then following the successful refocus of the *2001* publicity campaign (Kaplan combated negative reviews by the New York critics by taking out an ad based on a positive review by John Allen), to publicity coordinator in November 1968 (Anon. 1968i: 11). Kaplan had been of the belief that the generalised publicity campaign for *2001*, devised as being ‘family entertainment’, failed to target a growing youth demographic. Kaplan argued that the original campaign, with its Bob McCall artwork, presented the film as a ‘modern *Flash Gordon*. Instead, Kubrick had created a metaphysical drama encompassing evolution, reincarnation, the beauty of space, the terror of science, and the mystery of mankind. The campaign had to be reconceived’ (Kaplan 2007). Even though the film did appeal to a broad audience (Krämer 2015b: 43-47), by mid-May 1968, *2001* was still behind the likes of other MGM family marketed epics such as *Doctor Zhivago* in terms of advance sales. What this reflected was how large segments of the audience attending the film were a ‘quasi-“hippie” audience, which plunks down its money at the boxoffice’ rather than buy tickets in advance (Anon. 1968l: 20). Kubrick’s films primarily appealed to ‘metropolitan tastes’,

with the likes of *Dr. Strangelove* having a ‘smash success in its New York first-run venue’ but outside of major cities such success wasn’t replicated (Sklar 1988: 118). *Dr. Strangelove* became a cult hit in university towns and demonstrated how Kubrick’s films appealed to ‘urbane, sophisticated audiences’ (118). *Variety* reported on the extent to which MGM and Polaris had underestimated their marketing of *2001*:

This film is for youth and imaginative adults; the curious and the adventurous. There was a time during its production when the trade imagined that Kubrick’s sci-fi would be a “family” film, but this impression was killed when the pic actually opened [...] Metro is currently in the throes of changing ad campaign from “general” orientation to a specific youth “hip” appeal. (Anon. 1968k: 7)

By 1970, the advertising campaign for *2001* had been re launched under the guidance of Kaplan, who devised the now iconic Starchild/Ultimate Trip poster (Kaplan 2012a) for a 70mm screening of the film at New York’s Ziegfeld Theatre (Kaplan 2014a). It had been MGM’s Mort Segal who had sanctioned the marketing relaunch of the campaign alongside the film’s rerelease, seeing the original campaign organised by Terrell as ‘dehumanising’ the film and limiting its audience potential (Kaplan 2012b). The new marketing campaign exploited the previous use of the phrase ‘the ultimate trip’, which had featured in MGM Records adverts in summer 1968 for the *2001: A Space Odyssey* soundtrack. Under a red tinted close-up of Bowman from the Star Gate sequence and the bold heading of ‘The Ultimate Trip’, the advert claimed, ‘That’s what they’re calling it on “underground” FM. And they’re playing it like Progressive Rock. Above ground, they’re calling it the sound track album of the year. And it’s selling like there’s no tomorrow’ (Anon. 1968m: 49).

Kaplan purposely drew on the cult, underground appeal of both *2001* and of Kubrick. What Kubrick represented by 1970 was an innovative, controversial director whose films resonated with youth audiences. The Star Child poster features only a grainy close up of the enigmatic figure from the closing sequence of the film, along with a three-word tagline and the film’s title. The only name on the poster is Kubrick’s. Kubrick had become synonymous with a brand that signalled controversy, genius and mystery. What Kubrick had found in Mike Kaplan was someone who knew how to brand and sell a Kubrick film. He told Kaplan that he was the only person he knew of who had the knowledge to handle his films and requested he leave MGM to work solely

for him (Kaplan 2012b). He subsequently took up the role of vice-president of Polaris Productions. Kaplan's central philosophy to film publicity was as follows:

A film's campaign could determine its success and every good film could be a box office winner if it had the right poster [...] Movie posters have complex and competing elements — text in the form of title treatment, credits and slogans that merge with visuals — they are a pre-Ed Ruscha construct. (Kaplan 2012a)

Perhaps within Kaplan's philosophy we can find the seed of what the Kubrick brand meant in its most basic terms. For if Kaplan, whom Kubrick felt was the man to brand and market his films, saw film posters as an extension of Ruscha-esque Pop Art, then we can see what the two men saw the Kubrickian brand as representing: the fusion of the commercial with art. The Kubrick brand was art-house experimentalism framed within mass culture genres. Kubrick did not ultimately create family entertainment (even if *2001* had been initially pitched as such to MGM (see Frewin 2010: 93)), but Modernist films that at times were indebted to movements such as Pop Art (Melia 2017; Naremore 2006: 7). Certainly, the opening forty minutes of *A Clockwork Orange* are a compilation of Pop Art references, from Richard Hamilton to Andy Warhol and Allen Jones, right through to the typographic obsessions of Ed Ruscha reflected in the Korova Milk Bar. Matt Melia notes that the Pop Art style of *A Clockwork Orange* was 'appropriated by popular culture – Led Zeppelin's drummer Jon Bonham adopted Alex's bowler hat and Droog suit [...] while the film was a stylistic influence on David Bowie's Ziggy Stardust incarnation' (forthcoming, 2017). This Pop Art sensibility was increasingly reflected in the film posters developed for Kubrick's films in the 1970s and 1980s living up to Kaplan's philosophy, as well as utilising the creative efforts of influential Pop Art figures like Phillip Castle (Castle designed the posters for *A Clockwork Orange* and *Full Metal Jacket*). Kubrick had found in Kaplan the man to sell his brand of cinema, as well as having secured the chance to control the way his films were promoted and distributed. Now he had to prove he could do it better than the studios that were financing him.

Kaplan took up the post of vice-president of Polaris Productions on 3 May 1971 (Anon. 1971d: 21). Over the next four years, Kubrick and Kaplan were in almost daily contact, planning and strategising publicity, promotion and distribution of his films (Kaplan 2007). Kubrick had protested at what he believed had been the neglectful publicity and promotion of his films in the past by the likes of Columbia. Kubrick

suspected that neglect of his and similar challenging films, was ‘predicated on an expectation of failure’ (Kubrick 1964c). This was a recurrent complaint from independent producers throughout the 1960s and 1970s, with John Boorman displeased at Warner Bros.’s handling of *Deliverance*, which he also attributed to the notion of an expectation of failure, saying:

When you see what happens to a film that’s actually making them [the studios] heaps of money, you tremble about an interesting failure in their hands. I am coming more and more round to the opinion that if you want anything done properly these days, you have to go and do it yourself. (Malcolm 1972: 12)

With *A Clockwork Orange*, Polaris conducted ‘a perfectly choreographed advertising-publicity-exhibition campaign that broke house records in every major city’ (Kaplan 2014a). The campaign aimed to maximise profit and to establish a firm Kubrick brand. Polaris devised several promotional approaches, including a tie-in “novelization” of the film, a distinct poster design, a *Newsweek* cover story, a newspaper for the film – the “Orange Times” – a soundtrack album, and a bold press brochure. A number of these promotional items sought to exploit the controversial nature and reception of the film and play up its youth appeal. It also involved a unique distribution campaign in which Kubrick was intimately involved in the ‘crucial selection of cinemas, which were usually decided by a studio’s sales executives’ (Kaplan 2014a).

David Cook has argued that the promotion and distribution practices of Hollywood in the early 1970s took on a ‘new sophistication’, with a turn toward ‘strategic or “scientific” marketing’ (Cook 2000: 14). Cook specifies that this turn to such strategic management of promotion and distribution began with *The Godfather* (1972), a film that performed spectacularly at the box office. It had grossed \$568,800 on its first week of release in just two cities (Anon. 1972b: 21), and over \$3 million by its second week, showing in seventeen cities (Anon. 1972c: 11). *A Clockwork Orange* did not gross this amount until its fourteenth week on release (Anon. 1972b: 21). But the scientific and strategic approach to promoting and distributing a film that Cook attributes to *The Godfather* is somewhat neglectful of the significance of what Kubrick was doing with *A Clockwork Orange*.

Kubrick tasked one of his secretaries to collate box office data from back issues of *Variety* into his own personal distribution database (Kaplan 2014a). *Variety* recorded

weekly grosses for key cities and their cinemas across the USA. By 7 May 1969, the trade journal introduced a weekly '50 Top-Grossing Films' chart, showing the highest grossing pictures nationally based on key theatres in the major cities (Anon. 1969f: 15). Kubrick's database broke down gross data for films similar to *A Clockwork Orange*, including *Midnight Cowboy* and *The Wild Bunch* (1969), to see at which cities and cinemas they grossed the most. The ledgers were organised by the name of the city, the ticket prices, name of the films screened, and the number of tickets sold from 1970 to 1972 (Anon. 1972f). Mike Kaplan explained the reasoning behind the creation of this database that took several months:

To choose the right theater in each city, we needed to know which cinema sold the most tickets to the most interesting pictures. But while a studio would know what its own films grossed, detailed box office figures of competitive films were closely held secrets. There was no comparative information, and that is exactly what Stanley wanted.  
(Kaplan 2014a)

The database allowed Kubrick and Kaplan to direct with military precision where to target *A Clockwork Orange* on any given week, advising a somewhat dumbfounded Warner Bros. distribution department as to their preferences. Distribution planning began in summer 1971, with Kubrick in correspondence with Leo Greenfield, the head of distribution at Warner Bros., about his desired distribution strategy. Kubrick wanted *A Clockwork Orange* to open in only four cities: New York, Los Angeles, Toronto and Denver (Kubrick 1971b). Kubrick's strategy, even in the days of platform releasing, saw him have a much narrower distribution strategy than the average Warner Bros. release.<sup>23</sup> This caused consternation with Leo Greenfield, who told Kubrick that 'I do not believe you are doing justice to picture going as narrowly as you propose' (Greenfield 1971a).

The initial week of *A Clockwork Orange*'s release (the week ending 22 December 1971) saw Kubrick narrow his strategy further, to just two theatres in two cities, upping this only incrementally to four theatres in four cities by the third week of January 1972. Throughout its release in 1972, the film played on average in nine theatres in an average of fifteen cities, leading to an average weekly gross of

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<sup>23</sup> This is based on data compiled as part of this research from Variety's weekly '50-Top Grossing Films'.



\$179,873.<sup>24</sup> Such a low weekly average would certainly have caused worry among Warner Bros. distribution executives, given that the average weekly gross of other similar budgeted Warner's releases in 1971 and 1972 was \$199,698. Greenfield had sent a memo to all of his field managers in the summer of 1971 after previewing the film, declaring, 'I sincerely believe this picture will be the greatest grosser in history of Warners and possibly one of greatest in the entire motion picture industry' (Greenfield 1971b). Instead, Kubrick's distribution strategy was leading to ten per cent lower grosses than the average Warner Bros. picture.

The box office data for 1971 and 1972 shows, however, that *A Clockwork Orange* achieved an exceptional top fifty box office run of forty-three weeks. This was something even *The Godfather* could not manage, maintaining only thirty-two weeks in the top fifty. The average top fifty run in 1971 and 1972 was twenty-three weeks. Kubrick's distribution and promotion strategy had nearly doubled that average on *A Clockwork Orange*, this despite its lower than average weekly grosses. What Kubrick's strategy amounted to was to have *A Clockwork Orange* showing in a lower average number of theatres than other Warner Bros. releases, but in an average higher number of cities. The result led to a much longer run in the box office top fifty, with a low weekly average gross, but a much higher total top fifty gross. By the end of its initial run in the top fifty, it had grossed \$8,187,595, in comparison to the Warners average of \$4,904,901, an increase of nearly sixty-seven per cent. Kubrick's database on the ticket sales and performance of films across a range of cinemas in the USA saw him implement a platform release strategy that maximised the commercial viability of a film that, in theory, should have seen its market limited by its X-rating (*A Clockwork Orange* was re-released with an R-rating in 1973 after Kubrick made cuts to it) (Anon. 1973b).

Kubrick's attempts to replicate this success with *Barry Lyndon* were less successful. The film, which had seen its budget escalate from \$3.5 million (Anon. n.d.) to \$11 million (Whittington 2015), achieved only an initial fourteen-week run in the top fifty, at the end of which it had grossed \$4,920,903. Warner Communications chief executive Steven Ross declared to his shareholders in May 1976 that *Barry Lyndon* had been a 'flop' for Warner Bros. (Verrill 1976: 3). By the release of *The Shining* and *Full*

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<sup>24</sup> Figures in this section are based on data compiled from weekly issues of *Variety* from 1971-1972.

*Metal Jacket*, Kubrick turned toward forms of saturation release, particularly with the latter, which opened on 125 theatres in ten cities, building to a high of 175 theatres cities by its fourth week of release. A number of high-profile, super-grossing films in the early-to-mid 1970s, including *Jaws*, *The Exorcist*, and *The Godfather* resulted in studios making ‘investment decisions based on a product’s actual potential for sales in its main market [...] rather than “assume a market that would justify the outlay”’ (Cook 2000: 14). Certainly, the methods of distributing *A Clockwork Orange* were overtaken by the innovative saturation release of *Jaws*, which arguably impacted on *Barry Lyndon* and *The Shining*. *The Shining* maintained only twelve weeks in the top fifty box office chart, and *Full Metal Jacket* only thirteen weeks, grossing \$11.5 and \$13.5 million respectively at the end of their initial chart runs (and on the back of much higher budgets than *A Clockwork Orange*). With *A Clockwork Orange* though, Kubrick had managed to show Warner Bros. how he was able to conform to their early 1970s policy of low-budget, fast-turnaround, youth oriented pictures.

Kubrick had daily strategy meetings with Mike Kaplan from summer 1971 through 1972 to discuss how to further the distribution potential of *A Clockwork Orange* and promote the Kubrick brand (Kaplan 2014a). Kubrick’s methods of distributing and promoting *A Clockwork Orange* certainly saw him develop ‘new sophistication about distribution and marketing’ – the scientific marketing and distribution that Cook insists began with *The Godfather* (Cook 2000: 14). Cook goes onto suggest that this new sophistication saw the development of the ‘concept of the movie as a discrete product (and, increasingly, as a franchise or product *line*)’ (14). This line of argument can be attributed to what Kubrick was attempting to create about himself and his own films: a Kubrick brand and identity, one that possessed distinct cult appeal (Mathijs and Sexton 2011: 70). Certainly Kubrick’s cult branding with the likes of *A Clockwork Orange* came at a time ‘in which Hollywood was competing for art film audiences as art films, pornography, and countercultural films all crossed over into increased mainstream popularity’ (Church 2006). As such, a number of what have come to be viewed as cult directors emerged in the 1970s because of how they merged artistry with popular genre that raised ‘their cultural status from being mere genre pictures to being the artful products of an auteur’ (Church 2006). And Kubrick did just this by producing films that occupied what Kate Egan calls a sub-cultural space between art

and cult cinema (Egan 2006: 35), mixing ‘low/mass and high/art in ways that made his films relatively popular to most viewers (Church 2006). Directors took advantage of the demise of the production code to explore more violently and sexually provocative topics. What resulted was films that challenged ‘the distinction between art films, commercial entertainment and exploitation movies’ (McDonagh 2004: 108), cult films that appealed to young audiences and subcultures (Hunter 2008: 99). The films of directors such as Monte Hellmann, Bob Rafelson, William Friedkin and others ‘celebrated sex, drugs, rock music, pop art, high camp, low culture [...] [and] they systematically reworked the genre films they loved for contemporary audiences’ (McDonagh 2004: 110). Audiences responded to these films with cult behaviour (see Mathijs and Sexton 2011: 57-66; Hunter 2016: 41-57), particularly with Kubrick and *A Clockwork Orange*:

“Cult” behavior associated with the film was especially marked in Britain (the film’s setting), where actual teenage gangs emulated the distinctive dress and talk of the film’s dangerous young “droogs,” this being one of several trends in British youth counterculture (along with teddy boys, skinheads, mods & rockers, etc.) that would eventually culminate in the punk movement of the late-1970’s. (Church 2006)

Kubrick and Kaplan certainly realised that the prime audience for *A Clockwork Orange* was what they termed the ‘youth media – college underground’, these being the ‘strongest Kubrick followers’ (Kaplan 1971). Kubrick therefore felt that the publicity emphasis for *A Clockwork Orange* had to be on the college underground, which needed to be informed of the film before the Christmas school vacations. At the same time, ‘screenings have to be scheduled before they leave and in enough time for reviews to break’ (Kaplan 1971: 1). Kubrick requested that Warner Bros. compile information on ‘college publications showing last December publication date, first January publication date, and dates of the respective Christmas recesses’ (1). Kaplan also wanted Warner Bros. to arrange an interview with Kubrick on the community college series *The Sound on Film*, which had previously featured the likes of Robert Altman, David Lean, William Vandenheuval, and Robert Mitchum (2). In addition, Kubrick wanted an extensive underground advertising campaign, directed initially at publications such as *Los Angeles Free Press*, *Village Voice*, *East Village Other*, *Good Times*, *Organ*, *Rolling Stone*, and *Crawdaddy* (2). A ‘second wave’ of ads was to be placed in smaller underground publications in January and February 1972, including in *Creem*, *Changes*,

*Interview*, *University Review*, *Fusion*, *Rock*, *Zygote*, *Ramparts*, *Other Scenes*, and *Screw*. This was to be complemented with airtime on underground radio stations prior to the release of the film, and the two weeks following. It was agreed that audiences ‘would respond heavily, and additional expenditures here could wait until sixth to eighth week or when sustaining push needed’ (2).

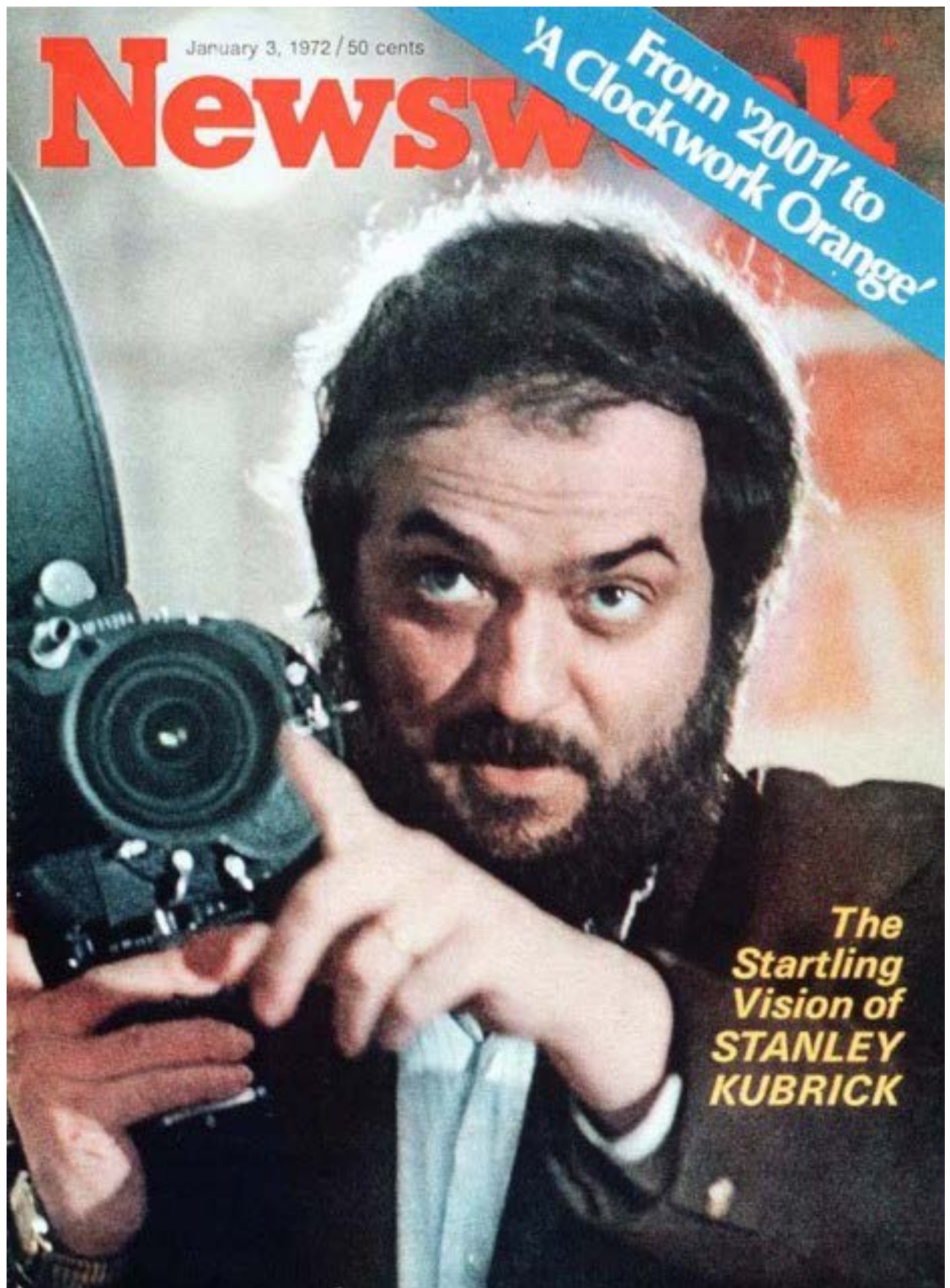
The cult branding also saw Kubrick turn to publisher Ian Ballantine, founder of Ballantine Books, for his novelisation of the film. A hugely successful publisher due to its innovations in cheap paperback publishing, Ballantine had a focus on science fiction and fantasy. Ballantine published authors ranging from Anthony Burgess and Arthur C. Clarke, to J.R.R. Tolkien and Ray Bradbury (Tabor 1995). Ballantine was credited as developing the mass-market paperback, with publications priced between \$1.50 and \$3.00 (Tabor 1995). Kubrick entered into negotiations with Ballantine to publish his vision of a novelisation of *A Clockwork Orange* in mid-1971. Writing to Ian Ballantine, Kubrick explained his intention for the book, saying ‘I think the idea of a total graphic record of the film, represented by each cut and the dialogue, will be an important innovation in film books’ (Kubrick 1971c). The book was published in paperback in July 1972, branded as *Stanley Kubrick’s A Clockwork Orange*, with the cover page a replica of the film poster. At the bottom of the book, in much smaller print, is the clarification that the novelisation was ‘based on the novel by Anthony Burgess’. The novelisation of a film itself adapted from a literary text was not unheard of; it had previously occurred on Kubrick’s *Dr. Strangelove*. But *Stanley Kubrick’s A Clockwork Orange* was an attempt to render the visual experience of Kubrick’s film into a photographic collection. As numerous reviews reported, the book improved ‘on the usual format of a published script. *Stanley Kubrick’s A Clockwork Orange* tightens the relationship between dialogue and visuals by placing the spoken word between corresponding film frames. Some 700 stills are used in this eye-catching presentation’ (George 1972). *Variety* described the collection as unique, being ‘conceived and put together by Kubrick himself’ (Anon. 1972d: 12). Other film companies had been rumoured to be looking to take a similar approach with their back catalogue of classic films, but Kubrick and Ballantine had published ahead of them (Anon. 1972d: 12). With *Stanley Kubrick’s A Clockwork Orange*, Kubrick puts himself in a central role and emphasises himself as the brand. The film’s stars are not named on the cover of the

book, while in promotional material Ballantine talked up the fact that it had been Kubrick who had both ‘conceived’ and ‘put together’ the book (12). The way it was devised and marketed suggested a strategic branding exercise of the director himself.

But profit motivation was also certainly prominent in the book’s creation. Prior to the release of *Summer of 42* (1971), Warner Bros. had insisted that the film’s screenwriter, Herman Raucher, quickly write a novelisation to aid with the film’s promotion (Park 2002). As Raucher recalls, the book ‘gets to be a bestseller before the movie is released. So, when the ads for the movie come out, they say, “... based upon the national bestseller” [...] But we all know that the movie was written first’ (Park 2002). Similarly Paramount had the writer of *Love Story* (1970), Erich Segal, adapt the screenplay into what *Vogue* called a ‘modest first novel’ in order to pre-sell the film. The book was published on 4 February 1970 – nine months before the film – and became a huge commercial success, maintaining thirty-eight weeks in the number one spot of the *New York Times* bestseller list (Cousins 1971: 130). Deborah Allison has argued how the 1970s onwards saw Hollywood’s conglomerates recognising the ‘financial advantages of exploiting their most popular properties across multiple subdivisions of their businesses’ (Allison 2016: 5). It must be argued that producers too saw the advantage, including Kubrick. The profit motivation in developing *Stanley Kubrick’s A Clockwork Orange* is also hinted at in the way Kubrick suggested a similar idea to his close friend, producer Sig Shore, who was in the midst of producing a sequel to *Super Fly* (1972). Shore himself was looking to fully exploit the film’s profit potential in every way possible, explaining that, ‘As for the ‘Super Fly’ paperbacks, I went to Ballantine’s at Stanley Kubrick’s suggestion [...] the first edition of 350,000 copies sold out after the film opened’ (Werba 1973: 30).

Quality cannot be seen as central to the publication of *Stanley Kubrick’s A Clockwork Orange*. After all, Ballantine Books could hardly be considered a quality publisher, with its tendency to publish mass-market crime, fantasy, science fiction and pulp crime novels. What we can assume, then, is that given the retail price of the book (\$3.50) the intention was to reach as large a market as possible. Prior to the book’s release, the film was rapidly falling down the ranks of the top fifty box office chart, as well as seeing its play dates falling from thirteen cinemas in the week of 21 June 1972 to five cinemas by the week of 26 July. Similarly, the average weekly gross dropped to

just \$29,900. Yet in the three weeks following the book's release, weekly takings drastically increased to \$421,399 and the film rose to number two in the top fifty box office chart and was playing in thirty-nine cinemas.



*Figure 7:* The 1972 front cover of Newsweek, the photograph of which Kubrick staged himself. The article said Kubrick had an 'inexhaustible drive to orchestrate the smallest details' (Zimmerman 1972: 28).

Given that Kubrick was overseeing the film's distribution strategy, there is a correlation between the upswing in the film's box office takings (of over 1300 per cent) and the book's release. This promotional strategy was at the heart of all the tie-in products devised by Kaplan and Kubrick. Given that *A Clockwork Orange* had received an X-rating in the USA, new outlets to reach an audience had to be found. This was particularly true when regional newspapers, such as *Detroit News* and *The Cleveland Post*, began refusing to publish adverts for X-rated films (Anon. 1972e: 3). What followed was Kaplan's idea for *A Clockwork Orange*'s own newspaper: *Orange Times*. The publication was devised as a 'comprehensive editorial handout that would become both the production notes and the solution to the advertising ban in markets where X-rated films had limited media access' (Kaplan 2012b). But also important to the strategy, as it had been on *2001*, was the placing of Kubrick at the centre of the film's creation and authorship and devising a mythic persona about Kubrick. Kubrick himself was actively involved in this process, particularly when it came to interviews. The interviews Kubrick gave were limited, and when he did give them he insisted on seeing his copy so that he could edit them (Kaplan 2014b). Kubrick clearly recognised the means by which interviews communicated an identity for himself and therefore were key to the brand he was fashioning. *Newsweek* was granted an interview as part of the publicity for *A Clockwork Orange*, which was published on 3 January 1972, just two weeks after the film's release. Kubrick was to be the cover story and *Newsweek* was set to despatch a photographer from its art department in New York to Kubrick's British home to take his picture for the front cover. But Kubrick took the unprecedented step of insisting that *he* would take the photograph, to the annoyance of *Newsweek* (Kaplan 2014b). Kubrick took the eventual photograph with the assistance of his wife, Christiane, and Jan Harlan, in his wife's studio (Kaplan 2014b) (see figure 7). The brand summarised in the *Newsweek* cover, with a relaxed Kubrick in a casual sports jacket and holding a small film camera while pointing decisively into the near distance, was that of an innovative auteur. The image was communicated in words in *A Clockwork Orange*'s press booklet, with the introduction describing Kubrick as 'exhilarating and exhausting', 'enigmatic', as having an 'unpampered self-sufficiency', and as an 'ironic humanist' (Alexander Walker, cited in *A Clockwork Orange* press book 1971: 1-2). The Kubrick brand was that of a Hollywood outsider, an artist who



was not compromised by Hollywood, its lifestyle or its deals, but rather a man who simply had a movie camera and a vision.

## **Conclusion**

The level of control Kubrick established for himself on *A Clockwork Orange* saw him develop innovative producing methods that contributed to the overwhelming financial success of the film. It also saw him finally obtain the full authority he had long battled for since the 1950s, subsuming the responsibilities of promotion and distribution into his producing role. While his promotion and distribution strategy may have at first confused Warner Bros., it soon paid off. In the process, Kubrick set a course for the New Hollywood in the 1970s for the super-producers that would come to dominate by the end of the decade. Kubrick's Hawk Films and Polaris Productions were a power base of production might bankrolled by Warner Bros. The set backs he had suffered following the release of *2001: A Space Odyssey* in his attempts to put his *Napoleon* project into distribution meant that Kubrick purposely set about conforming to the policy agenda of Warner Bros. by producing a low-budget picture targeted at the lucrative youth demographics and maximising its box office returns with a combination of strategic distribution and promotional tie-ins. Fundamental to this had been Mike Kaplan, who had the promotional acumen to understand Kubrick's vision and how it appealed to the college-underground and metropolitan crowd. It also led to Kubrick building a senior team around him made up of close family members or long-time colleagues who were familiar with his producing process, a model of production that would stay in place for the remainder of his career.

Yet Kubrick's unprecedented level of control and input on the promotion and distribution of *A Clockwork Orange* caused tension within Warner Bros. (as well as being deliberately used by Ted Ashley as part of a power struggle among the company's executives), and led some to question Kubrick's strategy and competence. In particular, Norman Katz and Myron Karlin were unsure of Kubrick's distribution plan in the UK and resentful of his growing authority within Warner Bros. Karlin was assigned to secretly report back to Katz any conversations he had with Kubrick. One such memo from Karlin to Katz on 9 February 1972 reported that Kubrick did not want *A Clockwork Orange* to be distributed to every major city in the UK until the media

reaction to it had calmed down. Karlin said that Kubrick ‘was, and is, afraid that the controversy which is going on over this film is dangerous and could lead to banning of the film in the GLC or in other local councils’ (Karlin 1972). He finished by arguing that if Warner Bros. had absolute control over *A Clockwork Orange* it would be ‘playing today in every important city of the UK [...] Stanley Kubrick, in all sincerity, is convinced that this would be reckless, that we can earn the same money later when the storm is over’ (Karlin 1972). Kubrick, upon discovering that Katz had been surreptitiously reporting on his activities, wrote to him to say that he found this ‘procedure odious and insulting’ (Kubrick 1972). Katz left Warner Bros. less than a month later, forced out by Ted Ashley, John Calley, and possibly Stanley Kubrick.

The power Kubrick had amassed and the desire to remain a mainstream producer who commanded large budgets was not, however, easy to sustain. Throughout the remainder of the decade, Kubrick struggled to both develop projects and see returns on his pictures in the same way he had with *A Clockwork Orange*. His strategic platform release strategy was severely limited by the time of *Barry Lyndon*’s release in 1975, with *Jaws* having transformed the industrial contexts of Hollywood by bringing saturation distribution to the fore. Kubrick had equally transformed the role of the producer and director, and become a super-producer commanding big budgets, the confidence of studios that were largely agreeable to grant autonomy, and being able to devise and control every production process, from development through to distribution and beyond.<sup>25</sup> Kubrick had also acquired the ability to conduct lengthy shooting schedules due to his ability to keep costs down through a combination of astute budgeting (a skill learned from his guerrilla producing days) and small crews working long hours (he also encouraged staff not to be unionised so that they could work beyond their legal limit (D’Alessandro 2012: 92-93)). But Kubrick’s achievement in becoming a super producer also made it increasingly difficult for him to operate, as the next chapter shall explore.

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<sup>25</sup> Movie brats like Steven Spielberg, discussed in Chapter Six, have been referred to as ‘super producers’ in the industry due to the level of artistic and business autonomy they possess while still operating within the mainstream system. They command large budgets and develop a recognisable producing brand (Jacobs 2011; Anon. 2011)

## Chapter Six:

### Kubrick versus the Super-Producers

By the 1970s, following his battles with the studios in the 1950s and 1960s, and the box office successes of *2001: A Space Odyssey* and *A Clockwork Orange*, Kubrick had accrued the legal authority on his films that allowed him control over all artistic and business aspects of his productions. Warner Bros. gained prestige from having Kubrick aligned with them, as well as the benefit of releasing his films into the lucrative home video market that they had the largest share of among all the major studios (Prince 2000: 98). Warner Bros. released both *The Shining* and *Barry Lyndon* on VHS in 1982 when there was no immediate prospect of Kubrick producing a new film (Anon. 1982b: 24). They also regularly re-released his films into theatres, such as with *Barry Lyndon* in the autumn of 1981. Warner Bros. designed a new marketing campaign for the film in order to ‘tap a sizeable market’ that ‘eluded’ the film on its original release (Robbins 1981: 5). This was done not always with the full cooperation of Kubrick, who feared that the rerelease of the film, which was alongside new first run films, would not receive the specialized handling it required (35). Still, Kubrick received from Warner Bros. the absolute creative freedom he deemed necessary to produce his films (Wyatt 2000: 88). This meant that not only was he able to produce the films he wanted (pending budgetary approval from Warner Bros.), but he also set the strategic direction for their promotion and distribution, controlled merchandising tie-ins, and authorised his own self-publicity. He had become the total filmmaker, selecting his own projects, developing them at his own pace, and producing them according to his own vision. And this method of independent producing would greatly influence a new generation of film producer-directors: the movie brats.

Steven Spielberg dominated the global box office from 1975 to 1993. The combined totals (based on US domestic grosses) of his biggest releases from that period – *Jaws*, *Close Encounters of the Third Kind* (1977), *Raiders of the Lost Ark* (1981), *E.T. the Extra-Terrestrial* (1982), and *Jurassic Park* (1993) – comes to \$1,304,882,469, and this figure accounts only for the original release runs and not for subsequent re-releases. Meanwhile, Spielberg’s contemporary, producer-director George Lucas, also dominated

the box office in the same period. His Lucasfilm Ltd's biggest releases, *Star Wars*, *The Empire Strikes Back*, and *Return of the Jedi* (1983) – films that he either directed, produced or executive produced – had a combined original US domestic release gross of \$769,245,499 (this is discounting the company's involvement in the *Indiana Jones* trilogy, among other things). Stanley Kubrick, who only released three films in the same period – *Barry Lyndon*, *The Shining*, and *Full Metal Jacket* – grossed \$110,375,050. To put this in context, the average budget for these three film producers across the films highlighted was \$23.7 million for Steven Spielberg, \$20.3 million for George Lucas, and \$20.3 million for Stanley Kubrick. Kubrick's average budget from the 1970s and into the 1990s matched that of Lucas and was only three million short of Spielberg's average. Yet his combined gross was \$1,194,507,419 short of Spielberg's and \$658,870,449 of Lucas's.<sup>26</sup>

Kubrick was faced with a changing industrial context from that in which he produced *2001* and even *A Clockwork Orange*. The high-concept saturation release of *Jaws* in 1975 changed the marketing and distribution landscape of Hollywood permanently, with the film grossing over \$7 million on its opening weekend alone (Wyatt 2000: 111). The industry also saw the rise of the super-producer, a new breed of total filmmaker with absolute power and authority over their productions and possessing a distinct authorial brand. In large part, Kubrick had made significant contributions to the creation of this new super-producer, becoming what Adrian Turner described as the 'prototype movie brat': 'Stanley Kubrick is the complete filmmaker [...] the guru for an entire generation of Hollywood directors. While Coppola, Lucas and Scorsese might make very different films, it was Kubrick who taught them the meaning of power and independence' (Turner 1988: 25). But the model of producing that Kubrick had established was also the source of his own weakness, particularly in the face of the new, younger, and faster super-producers who were dominating the box office. Kubrick's move to become the total filmmaker also meant that he now possessed the authority to request every possible outcome of his crew and collaborators before making a decision. Indeed, as Kubrick's output from the 1970s onwards reduced dramatically, he acquired an ever-growing obsession about the films of the new super-producers such as Lucas and Spielberg (as discussed later in this chapter).

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<sup>26</sup> Figures in this section are based on data from [boxofficemojo.com](http://boxofficemojo.com).

This chapter will examine the problems Kubrick faced in the 1980s and 1990s. Competing against the high-concept blockbuster at the box office, but wanting to continue producing on the kind of budgets he had grown accustomed to, Kubrick was in a persistent state of project development. From 1975 until 1999, a twenty-four year period, Kubrick produced only three films, compared to the ten films he either directed or produced between the twenty-two year period of 1953 and 1975. Kubrick had always been slow in his output of films, but after 1975 it almost stalled completely. Between 1953 and 1975 Kubrick averaged a film just over every two years. From 1975 to 1999 that average tripled to one film every eight years. To try to understand why his output decreased so drastically despite the authority and independence awarded to him by Warner Bros., the chapter will examine the industrial contexts surrounding these later years of Kubrick's career. This was a period that not only saw a slowing down of his productions, but also saw him finding it difficult to move a project out of development and into production.

The chapter will begin by looking at the process of development at Kubrick's companies, with a focus on his long-time assistant Anthony Frewin who was tasked with being Kubrick's in-house reader. This role was later expanded into a company, Empyrean Films, which was supervised by Frewin. The chapter will look at how Frewin recommended projects to Kubrick and how Empyrean explored the industrial trends of Hollywood. The chapter will then look at the rise of the super-producer during this period and compare and contrast their producing model against that of Kubrick. There will be a close comparison with arguably the ultimate super-producer of the 1970s to the 1990s, Steven Spielberg. Kubrick and Spielberg became close friends and there are many similarities in their business strategies. Kubrick even considered producing Spielberg on the project *A.I.* The chapter will conclude with a final case study of an unmade Kubrick project, *Aryan Papers*, which will be situated in the production context of Spielberg's *Schindler's List* (1993). The chapter focuses on an unmade Kubrick project at the expense of films he did successfully produce in order to understand the constraints of Kubrick's own producing methods, as well as the wider industrial constraints he was facing. The aim will be to understand, firstly, why Kubrick took so long in producing movies from the 1970s onwards and, secondly, what the impact of obtaining absolute authority of his productions had on his role as a producer.

## **Empyrean Films**

Anthony Frewin (1947-) first worked for Stanley Kubrick as a runner during pre-production of *2001: A Space Odyssey* (Phillips and Hill 2002: 124). Frewin's father, Edward Frewin, also worked for Kubrick and had convinced the producer to employ Anthony in September 1965, when Frewin had just turned seventeen (Frewin 2016). Kubrick, impressed with Frewin's commitment, soon promoted him to become his general assistant, a role he maintained until Kubrick's death in 1999. Frewin progressed to become one of Kubrick's most trusted advisers, becoming the 'in-house reader of novels, screenplays, and such' (Frewin 2016). Rather than simply acquire the rights to vast swathes of literary property, Kubrick had Frewin read through and write reports of as many novels and screenplays as he could. The number became overwhelming though and so, in the late 1980s (approximately 1987), Kubrick sanctioned Frewin to place an advert in the *Times Literary Supplement* calling for readers (Frewin 2016). They would be employed under a newly incorporated company, Empyrean Films, of which Frewin would be the director, placing distance between the company and Kubrick so as to maintain anonymity. It was paramount to Kubrick that the press and wider industry not learn 'what novels etc he was "considering"' (Frewin 2016).

The team of readers, recruited and line-managed by Frewin, were never informed that Empyrean Films was a Stanley Kubrick company (Frewin 2016). The administration of the company, including its finances, was taken care of by Frewin, who dispatched weekly cheques to his team of readers. But Kubrick personally selected the books to give to them (Frewin 2016). Readers would typically receive around £20 to £50 to read novels and other literary works (Frewin 1988a; 1988b). Some would be asked to conduct research on potential projects at the British Library or other similar institutes, and were paid at a rate of £5.50 per hour (Anon. 1990b). This research included 'golem research', in connection with *The Golem* (Gustav Mergink 1914), 'literary robot research' (Frewin 1990a), and other similar sci-fi research between 1988-1990, including research into 'the year's best science fiction' (Frewin 1990b). Another reader in 1991 conducted 'Polish research', presumably in connection with *Aryan Papers* (Frewin 1991). The readers provided reports on an eclectic range of works, with the reports being fed back to Kubrick, who read every one of them before returning

them to Frewin to file away (Frewin 2016). The influence of the reports on Kubrick was to signify to him whether a story was in fact worth pursuing.

The direction to the readers and feedback on the reports could be quite pointed, as was the case with one reader on 24 November 1988 who had provided two reports on two collections of Bob Shaw science fiction short stories: *A Better Mantrap* (1982) and *Tomorrow Lies in Ambush* (1973). A handwritten note by Frewin compliments the reader for providing ‘good synopses – thanks’, but goes onto reprimand them for their formatting, saying, ‘double space and allow good margins at the foot of the typewritten page!!’ (Frewin 1988a). Such formatting was presumably at the request of Kubrick so as to allow him to annotate the reports with his thoughts and ideas.

Empyrean also had a number of its readers repeatedly write reports on *Traumnovelle* (1926), the Arthur Schnitzler novella that would eventually be adapted into *Eyes Wide Shut*. Kubrick had a long history of attempting to adapt this work, going as far back as the late 1950s, when he was in correspondence with Schnitzler’s grandson, Peter Schnitzler. During production of *Spartacus*, Kubrick had invited Peter to visit the set for a day. Schnitzler subsequently wrote a letter to Kubrick to thank him for this opportunity. Dated 27 May 1959, the letter goes on: ‘I am excited at your interest in, and ideas about, my grandfather’s work and I hope that something comes of it’ (Schnitzler 1959). The letter details how Schnitzler had obtained a copy of his grandfather’s notebooks and was forwarding them immediately to Kubrick, ‘so that perhaps you could look at some of his ideas’ (Schnitzler 1959). The financial accounts of Empyrean show that in 1988 readers were again and again being asked to write a report of *Traumnovelle*. The first was on 18 October, followed by further reports on 29 October, 22 November, 25 November, two on 26 November, and two on 7 December, with comments on the latter by Anthony Frewin to the reader thanking them for their ‘thoughtful work’, which was ‘much appreciated’ (Frewin 1988b). Commenting on these reports, Frewin has said that Kubrick was ‘interested in other people’s “take” on the book. The readers’ report had little or no impact, I believe, on SK’s approach’ (Frewin 2016). Empyrean was almost like Kubrick’s personal focus group of literary minded individuals providing opinion on works that interested him and their potential for adaptation. It would take until 1994 for Kubrick to begin adapting *Traumnovelle* with screenwriter Frederic Raphael.

There are clear patterns of interest in the books that Kubrick gave his readers, particularly science fiction, the literary novel, and post-modern authors. These included Isaac Asimov, Philip K. Dick, and Thomas Pynchon. Kubrick had shown an interest in Pynchon's *The Crying of Lot 49* (1965), a book that Frewin had outlined as the basis for a potential Kubrick film. He broke the story down into a development report, outlining how it could be adapted, locations for filming, casting suggestions, and an approximate budget (Frewin n.d.). Kubrick's fascination with Pynchon derived from both the author's 'blackly funny humour' as well as his popularity (Frewin n.d.: 6). Frewin's development report pointed out that 'Pynchon has a great following in both the States and over here [UK]' with *The Crying of Lot 49* 'easily being the most popular [...] it has been continually in print in both countries since it was published' (6). The similarities between Kubrick and Pynchon are striking: Pynchon is a famed recluse, with scant information known about him, refusing to be 'interviewed or photographed' (Hunter-Tilney 2006: 26). A profile of Pynchon in the *Financial Times* in 2006 described his slow pace of output, how his work explored themes of humankind's enslavement to technology and the darkest recesses of the human mind, and how his fans are mostly a 'male army of obsessives who indulge in endless Pynchon-related speculation' (Hunter-Tilney 2006: 26).

*The Crying of Lot 49* was labelled by some as 'pop fiction' (McConnell: 1973: 15), part of a new American fiction that came to prominence in the 1960s, in which writers like Pynchon, Irvin Faust, and John Barth explored themes of 'the absurdity of society and the madness of the self' (Kostelanetz 1967: 8). Pynchon was a brand of post-War writer that initiated a trend of black comedy in literature, a herald of the genre that defined a new mood of scepticism in Cold War American society (Pogel and Chamberlain 1985: 187-188). Similarly, Kubrick had mainstreamed the use of black humour in American cinema with *Dr. Strangelove* and, as a consequence, 'opened the doors for the adaptations of books by such frank black comedians as Terry Southern, whose *The Magic Christian* (1969) and *Candy* (1968) developed black comedy for film with greater boldness and far more self-consciousness than had hitherto been the case' (Pogel and Chamberlain 1985: 186-187). The box office for black comedy in the late 1960s and throughout the 1970s was big; *Candy* grossed over \$16 million off the back of a \$3 million budget (imdb.com); *Mother, Jugs & Speed* (1976) returned nearly \$8



million in rentals (imdb.com); and *Dog Day Afternoon* (1975), Sidney Lumet's anti-establishment heist movie, grossed \$50 million off the back of a \$1.2 million budget (boxofficemojo.com).

But narrative trends had shifted dramatically since the early days of the New Hollywood, and Frewin argued that films like *Jaws* and *Star Wars* now utilised 'conventional subject matter and conventional narrative treatment' (Frewin n.d.: 1). Interestingly, a number of the books Kubrick sent to the readers at Empyrean were post-technological science fiction, dystopian cyber-punk, or fantasy, playing into a growing trend for science fiction in the wake of successful films such as *Star Wars*, but also films like *Mad Max* (1979), the *Aliens* franchise, *Blade Runner* (1982), *The Terminator* (1984), and *RoboCop* (1987). With the box office increasingly dominated in the 1980s by science fiction and fantasy, Empyrean's readers were sent titles that included John Crowley's *Engine Summer* (1979), a post-apocalyptic novel; Evelyn Waugh's *Love Among the Ruins* (1953), a satirical dystopian novel set in the near future in the UK; Ursula K. Le Guin's *The Dispossessed* (1974), a science fiction laced with political overtones about the state of capitalism; and William Gibson's cyberpunk science fiction *Mona Lisa Overdrive* (1988). Kubrick's interests and his direction of Empyrean were seemingly tied to greater narrative and industrial trends within Hollywood, though not exclusively science fiction. He still had a fascination with stories concerning relationships and extramarital affairs, requesting reader reports on the likes of Dostoevsky's *The Eternal Husband* (1870) and Ian McEwan's collection of short stories, *First Love, Last Rites* (1975). Both of these works can be described as possessing comic elements, playing into yet another narrative trend in Hollywood, the mature romantic comedy, particularly following on from the success of *When Harry Met Sally* (1989). They also speak to Kubrick's desire to adapt a story about marriage and infidelity, namely *Traumnovelle*.

But Frewin saw potential in black comedy as a particular genre of filmmaking that had barely been touched in American cinema. Taking a swipe at the popular appeal of *Star Wars*, the report for *The Crying of Lot 49* claimed that, 'Humour can be just as enthralling and exhilarating and captivating as any socko space opera' (Frewin n.d.: 1). The recognition of the potential box office success of black humour also reflects on some of Kubrick's most successful work, such as *Dr. Strangelove* and *A Clockwork*

*Orange*, which are laced with a darkly comic, at times perverse and grotesque humour. But given the changing industrial conditions of Hollywood, Kubrick and his staff were aware of the need for speed in order to be able to compete at a competitive box office if they were to adapt *The Crying of Lot 49*. To this end, a target was set of three years from pre-production through to distribution, keeping in mind that the marketplace will have inevitably altered in that short period of time. The report says that ‘markets are changing all the time [...] it is the measure of a successful filmmaker that he can gauge/gamble on/anticipate what will be of popular appeal come the opening of this picture’ (Frewin n.d.: 1). Kubrick not only had to respond to his own artistic and intellectual motives, but was also looking to the wider Hollywood industry and to the speed with which his contemporaries were producing.

What we also begin to see in the immediate aftermath of the release (and mediocre performance) of *Barry Lyndon* is Kubrick exploring multiple options to produce projects motivated in part by their financial implications. This was uppermost in his mind particularly when he committed to producing *The Shining* in the summer of 1977. He wrote to Jan Harlan, his production accountant Jo Gregory, and his production manager Doug Twiddy to ask them to provide him with ‘a general idea of the weekly cash requirements you think we will have for pre-production, for a 20-week shooting schedule, and for 10 months post-production’ (Kubrick 1977b). Harlan explored the logistical and budgetary requirements for adapting a number of projects, including an adaptation of Henry Rider Haggard’s *The Saga of Eric Brighteyes* (1890). Harlan prepared a treatment of the novel for Kubrick, adapting elements of the story to streamline it. The story concerned Viking explorers in Iceland in the tenth-century, but this inevitably meant the need to film on location: ‘It would have meant going on location to very cold areas if north Scotland wasn’t good enough. So probably would have been Iceland or Northern Finland and he [Kubrick] didn’t really fancy the idea’ (Appendix II). Kubrick had largely filmed both *A Clockwork Orange* and *Barry Lyndon* on location and had faced significant problems, ranging from time lost due to bad weather, damage to properties, accidents with actors, and death threats from the IRA. Studio filming allowed for the retention of control over such variables as weather and time. Just as *The Saga of Eric Brighteyes* would have proven logistically problematic

and costly, so too would shooting *The Crying of Lot 49* on location given the book's California setting.

Ultimately, *The Crying of Lot 49* never went beyond development, nor did the books sent to the Empyrean readers (with the exception of *Traumnovelle*). But what we can see is that Kubrick used Empyrean Films to locate new and exciting stories as well as search for unique narratives. In many respects, Empyrean was a counterintuitive reading company, locating books that Kubrick *should not* adapt. After all, despite his continuing interest in the industrial and box office trends of Hollywood, Kubrick's level of producing power from the 1970s saw him take absolute control of the Kubrick brand. This centred on a unique filmmaking aesthetic that saw him either set the trend or create films 'out of time' (Elsaesser 2012: 217), which deconstructed genre and created something that audiences had never seen on screen before. As Elsaesser has argued, Kubrick often set trends with his brand of prototype cinema, moving from genre-to-genre in the 1960s and 1970s as part of a wider industrial search for the 'winning combination, which could revitalize and re-energize what in spite of these transformations, remained an essentially stars-and-genre based way of making mainstream cinema' (2012: 215). Films that he did eventually put into production in the 1980s and 1990s were often at a remove from other films being made, either coming off the back of recent genre cycles (*The Shining* was released just after a spate of horror films, while *Full Metal Jacket* was a belated contribution to the mid-1980s Vietnam combat film cycle) or differing substantially to other films at the box office. Some of the marketing for *Eyes Wide Shut* drew upon the film's 'sexier' scenes (Nicole Kidman getting undressed, for instance), presumably to attempt to affiliate it with the earlier 1990s cycle of sexual thrillers. I.Q. Hunter suggests *Eyes Wide Shut* 'nostalgically updates erotic art cinema of the 1970s [...] within the contemporary format of the erotic thriller' (2008: 102). If anything, though, the film could be ascribed to the Kubrickian genre of filmmaking, to the Kubrick brand, what Linda Ruth Williams defined as 'emulating and exemplifying the pinnacles of trash genres through meticulously rendered works of cinema art' (2005: 397). Kubrick was as central to the film's marketing as its two stars, Tom Cruise and Nicole Kidman, and the film poster placed the surnames of the three together, with Kubrick given equal star billing. The Kubrick brand revolved around his search for a new and innovative way to tell a story. As the

following sections in the chapter will explore, quite often this meant exploring a project to its very limits (see Krämer 2015c) and ultimately abandoning it and repeating the process with another project.

### **Kubrick and Spielberg**

Steven Spielberg and Stanley Kubrick became friends in the late 1970s, apparently introduced to each other by George Lucas. The trio had encountered one another during the period that Kubrick had taken over Elstree Studios to film *The Shining* (D'Alessandro 2012: 121). Spielberg has talked of how he would regularly receive phone calls from Kubrick and visited him at his home on a number of occasions (Harlan 2001). Kubrick was clearly an admirer of Spielberg, both of his work and his ability to dominate the box office (see Krämer 2017b: 197).

But the difference in how Spielberg and Kubrick approached producing could not have been starker. Kubrick's mode of operation had largely unchanged since the 1960s and whereas Spielberg and his Amblin Productions regularly featured in the trade journals, with yet new property acquisitions and production deals, Kubrick was seldom heard from, particularly following the release of *Full Metal Jacket*. There was brief speculation in 1993 that Kubrick might be about to work on a new science fiction project, *A.I.* Warner Bros. announced that Kubrick was to begin production on the project in late 1994, with *Screen International* describing the project as being 'set in the future when the greenhouse effect has melted the icecaps, flooding major cities such as New York and intelligent robots serve the community' (Dempsey 1993: 1). The project had been mooted for production at the turn of the decade, but had been abandoned due to what Kubrick perceived as being the poor quality of special effects (1). It was Spielberg's *Jurassic Park* that convinced him special effects had advanced enough for *A.I.* to go into production. But just as other rumours about potential Kubrick projects had disappeared without a trace, so too did *A.I.* It was another Kubrick project on the scrapheap.

It is intriguing to consider Spielberg as a producer and how he differed from and compared to Kubrick. After all, Kubrick did approach Spielberg to direct *A.I.* in the early 1990s, with himself as producer. Spielberg did not begin producing his own films until the 1980s with the incorporation of his own independent production company,

Amblin, in April 1980.<sup>27</sup> Spielberg's first feature as producer was *E.T. the Extra-Terrestrial*, a film that came to be the very symbol of Amblin; in 1984 the company logo was redesigned to feature the moon-silhouetted Elliott on his bike riding across the night sky. Prior to *E.T.*, Spielberg's films had been produced by close friends, including Michael Phillips, or by George Lucas's Lucas Films. *Jaws* had been produced by Richard D. Zanuck and David Brown, producers based at Universal, the studio that financed and heavily promoted the film. It had been at Universal where Spielberg had worked as a contract director on projects such as *Duel* (1971) and his first debut theatrical feature, *The Sugarland Express* (1974). In time, Amblin would not only produce Spielberg's own features, but the work of other directors as well. Spielberg would himself serve as an executive producer on films such as Robert Zemeckis' *Back to the Future* trilogy (1985-1990), or other 1980s staples like *Gremlins* (1984) and *Batteries Not Included* (1987), and he became more prolific as a producer of other's movies than a director of his own projects (Andrews 1992: 4). In fact, by 2016, Spielberg had produced or executive produced 148 movies (Russell 2017: 46). His business acumen was summed up in a press report from 1992, describing him as a pragmatic, ambitious workaholic (Andrews 1992: 4).

In contrast, Kubrick never produced a film beyond his own, and was credited as a producer on only nine of his thirteen feature films. Yet, whereas the accruelement of power and independence by Kubrick as a producer led to a decrease in his output of films, Spielberg's increased exponentially throughout the 1980s. He was building a power base, but despite this he infrequently took the credit of producer on his own work, a role that Kubrick had come to see as crucial to his own power and control. Between the formation of Amblin and the release of *Schindler's List*, Spielberg was only credited as producer on six out of the ten features he directed.

But both Spielberg and Kubrick were astute producers and businessmen. *Variety* reported on Spielberg's industry reputation in 1991, saying that many top studio executives saw a resemblance in Spielberg to Louis B. Mayer and David O. Selznick (Natale and Kissinger 1991: 1). Despite his family friendly films and childlike public

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<sup>27</sup> Amblin Entertainment is named after Spielberg's 1968 short film *Amblin*'. Amblin Entertainment produced a number of features shortly after its incorporation in 1980, including Spielberg's own *E.T.* and the Michael Apted directed *Continental Divide* (1981).

persona, executives reported Spielberg as an ‘intensely aggressive and acquisitive businessman who goes after projects with a tenacity that is striking even by the hardball standards of Hollywood’ (53). Spielberg’s was a method of producing that did not wholly differ in this regard to Kubrick’s. Kubrick had been concerned throughout his career with reshaping the role of the producer and of obtaining ever further control, as well as acquiring literary property that sparked his intellectual imagination. But Spielberg was interested in property acquisition for its own sake, using ‘his clout to gain possession of more projects than he can conceivably give his full attention to’ (53). This was arguably the case in the early 1990s, when Spielberg was parallel directing and producing *Jurassic Park* and *Schindler’s List*.

Spielberg had formed Amblin Entertainment with Frank Marshall and Kathleen Kennedy, the couple producing most of his projects throughout the 1980s. But the company was not as streamlined as its box office grosses might suggest. Just as Kubrick was often finding himself struggling to get projects out of development, so too did Amblin. Industry insiders in the 1980s and 1990s were often wary of entering deals with the company for fear of becoming stuck in development hell. This was put down to Spielberg’s business strategy of acquiring a vast array of projects that he himself did not have the time to direct. Spielberg, Kennedy and Marshall have dismissed any attempts to claim there was a specific business model at Amblin Entertainment, saying that they approached the business by ‘just making what we felt we wanted to see’ (Masters 2016). Kennedy had been the president of the company, which was described as being set up ‘like a mini-corporation – divided into divisions and departments’ (Andrews 1992: 4). But the company was far more strategized than its three founders care to let on. Spielberg always had final say on matters, but his focus was given to the thirty plus projects that would be in development at any one time (4). The setup of Amblin was described as being ‘staffed by 65 people, including producers, marketing specialists and merchandising experts. It is one of Hollywood’s largest independent production companies and considered the most productive by far’ (4). This was a highly organised business operation, with Spielberg at its head. Even if Spielberg was not a micromanager and delegated much of the responsibility, he was still the executive, through whom all decisions were passed, wielding ‘total control over his movies’ (4).

The company's overheads were largely covered by Universal, with only a few staff being paid by Amblin (Salamon 1987: 1). Kennedy operated the minutiae of Amblin and supervised day-to-day office administration and staff, but the *Wall Street Journal* was allowed rare access to the company's base in 1987 and revealed an image of a powerful producer:

Mr. Spielberg is a compulsive worker and his crew of 33 is a bunch of earnest, clean-cut young workaholics who could easily pass for Silicon Valley whiz kids. These Amblinites describe their boss as an energetic taskmaster [...] It is Mr. Spielberg himself who decides which of his films will generate merchandising tie-ins; he consults on scripts, ad campaigns and trailers. (Salamon 1987: 1)

Undoubtedly Kubrick had paved the way for this new breed of super producer, particularly in the way he had wrestled control over the publicity campaigns and merchandising tie-ins of his films. Branding and reputation are just as important as financial success, and this is something Kubrick actively promoted, the 'Kubrick brand'. He even referred to his independent production companies as the 'Stanley Kubrick Studios' (D'Alessandro 2012: 124), reflecting both his power and independence as a producer, but also the strength of the Kubrickian brand.

And yet, despite the similarities between Kubrick and Spielberg, by the 1980s Kubrick's method of producing stood in marked contrast to the prolific nature of Spielberg's producing. Kubrick seemed unable to move a project out of development, having more than enough time but struggling in the face of the swift pace of these new super producers like Spielberg. Consider the speed with which *Schindler's List* was produced once it entered production, compared to the sloth-like pace of *Aryan Papers*, slowed by Kubrick's indecision. The contrast also comes in the fact that Spielberg was not a micro-manager, like Kubrick; Spielberg delegated power often out of the necessity of the sheer amount of work he made for himself. As *Variety* reported, 'one producer who is working with him [Spielberg] says "he's not interested in the deeper details of things. The more projects he can spread his attention over the happier he is. He's more comfortable functioning as the doting uncle and delegating the specifics to others"' (Natale and Kissinger, 1991: 53). The producing control that Kubrick had so long battled for had resulted in a tendency to seek persistent control over every facet of his production and production companies.

Kubrick also developed a growing fascination with the blockbuster movies of Spielberg and Lucas and was regularly requesting figures on box office grosses (Anon. 1975; Anon. 1976; Anon. 1992). But this interest in the new super producers arguably had a detrimental effect on the development of his own projects. Take for instance the collaboration with Brian Aldiss on *A.I.* Aldiss and Kubrick had first discussed the possibility of collaborating in 1975, following the release of *Barry Lyndon* (Aldiss n.d. a). Kubrick greatly admired Aldiss's work, and in particular his short story *Supertoys Last All Summer Long* (1969), which 'attracted the attention of Stanley Kubrick, unsurprisingly considering Kubrick's interest in technology and sentient computers and the story's bleak portrait of human selfishness and irresponsibility' (Beard 2005: 5). The initial collaboration came to nothing, though the pair remained in correspondence over the ensuing years. It wasn't until the release and subsequent box office success of Spielberg's *E.T. the Extra-Terrestrial* that Kubrick seriously considered adapting *Supertoys*. Aldiss has said that Kubrick wanted to create a 'rival' movie to *E.T.* (Aldiss n.d. b). In a later legal dispute over his work for Kubrick (he had not been paid), Aldiss noted how he felt the story was disappointing because of his continuing fascination with *E.T.*, what he called Kubrick's 'E.T. syndrome' (Aldiss n.d. b). Despite some further discussion of potential ideas, by February 1983, Kubrick had soured on the collaboration (Aldiss n.d. b). There were further attempts to develop the project in the late 1980s and 1990s, working with writers such as Iain Watson and Sara Maitland, as well as with graphic illustrator Chris Baker (Krämer 2015c). Perhaps sensing his affinity with Spielberg, Kubrick eventually approached him to direct *A.I.*, with himself as producer (Appendix II). Such a move would have been unprecedented in Kubrick's career though, but was apparently a serious consideration by both filmmakers (Krämer 2015c: 380). For Kubrick to abdicate directorial control went against everything he had battled for and therefore may indicate a realisation that his slow output saw him (unintentionally) reacting to box office trends by the 1980s. Indeed, Aldiss suggested that Kubrick was 'reaching the end of his creative career' by the 1980s (Aldiss 2015). It is within this context the chapter will now move on to consider *Aryan Papers*, developed parallel to Spielberg's own *Schindler's List*.

### **Perpetual Pre-Production: The Case of *Aryan Papers***



One of the most famed ‘lost’ Kubrick films, aside from *A.I.* and *Napoleon*, was Kubrick’s Holocaust project, *Aryan Papers*. Based on the novel *Wartime Lies* by Louise Begley (1991), the project underwent significant development and pre-production and very nearly entered the production stage, but was abandoned at the last minute. The story goes that following the release of Steven Spielberg’s *Schindler’s List* Kubrick no longer felt the project could go ahead (Appendix II). But this reason alone does not account for the loss of money and the amount of time and actual contracts and financing that was being arranged. What follows is a reconstruction of the development and pre-production of the project in an attempt to understand the efforts involved in getting a Kubrick film into production, as well as seeking contextual understandings as to why, beyond the official line, *Aryan Papers* was abandoned.

Along with science fiction, one of Kubrick’s primary narrative interests throughout his career was the Holocaust and what Geoffrey Cocks calls ‘German subjects’ (2004: 150). Cocks provides a brief overview of the abandoned Kubrick projects related to Germany and the Holocaust, drawing on biographical sources such as John Baxter (1999) and Alexander Walker (1972), and using them towards his own overarching argument of Kubrick’s films being weighted in twentieth century history.<sup>28</sup> Similarly Filippo Ulivieri offers a brief survey of the Nazi-themed works Kubrick contemplated adapting to the screen, including *Swing Under the Nazis: Jazz as a Metaphor for Freedom* (1985), Mike Zwerin’s (a trombonist who played with Miles Davis (Anon. 2014)) account of jazz musicians in Nazi-occupied Europe. There are other archival sources that explicitly reveal Kubrick’s continuing interest in the Holocaust, including the Harold Pinter Papers at the British Library. Pinter and Kubrick had become friends engaged in regular correspondence in the late 1970s (Kubrick 1982a). Pinter even on occasion asked Kubrick to look at his screenplays, including an adaptation of the first volume of Marcel Proust’s *In Search of Lost Time*, though it is not entirely clear whether Pinter hoped for Kubrick to direct the project (Kubrick 1982b).<sup>29</sup> The two also corresponded about fiction and non-fiction work that they had

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<sup>28</sup> Geoffrey Cocks provides an insightful account of Kubrick’s interest in ‘The German Lieutenant’ in the late 1950s, examining the screenplay by Richard Adams (2004: 151-154).

<sup>29</sup> Kubrick recommended that Pinter take the project, published in 1977 as *The Proust Screenplay*, to the BBC (Kubrick 1982b). It was never realised as a film, but was later staged as a theatrical play at the Royal National Theatre, directed by Di Trevis. For further details see Zerofsky (2014).

read, suggesting titles they thought the other might be interested in. This included *The Destruction of the European Jews* (Hilberg 1961), one of the earliest authoritative histories of the Holocaust (Esh 1963: 114). Kubrick told Pinter that he was interested in making a film about the Holocaust and that *The Destruction of the European Jews* was ‘constantly illuminated by the kind of vivid detail which can be the spark of narrative ideas. Indeed, there are so many ideas, situations and characters set forth, the problem is more one of selection than anything else’ (Kubrick 1982a). As Nathan Abrams has noted, Kubrick implored anyone he could to read the book, including Jan Harlan and, in the 1980s, Michael Herr, describing it as ‘monumental’ (2015c: 545). Abrams and Cocks have continued to explore the way Kubrick’s Jewish heritage and the Holocaust pervade his work and remained an overriding obsession for him. As Cocks notes, paraphrasing Kubrick, ‘what he most wanted to make was a film about the Holocaust, but good luck in putting all that into a two-hour movie’ (2013: 20). Instead, Cocks argues that Kubrick indirectly alluded to the Holocaust – or ‘sublimated his feelings’ – through a number of his works, most prominently in *The Shining* (20).

It remained an ongoing active concern for Kubrick to produce a film about the Holocaust in the 1990s. Jan Harlan has said that Kubrick wished to make a fiction film, rather than a documentary, in order to be able to tell a story that had drama (his comments to Pinter, above, hint at this). He also briefly considered, circa 1976, a project based on the UFA studios in Berlin during the 1930s and 1940s (Appendix II). Harlan was also asked by Kubrick to explore a project with the Nobel Laureate Isaac Bashevis Singer. Singer’s fiction explored Jewish themes, with some of his books set during the Holocaust, including *Enemies, A Love Story* (1972) and *Shosha* (1978). Unfortunately, Singer turned down the offer of collaborating with Kubrick (Appendix II). By 1991 Kubrick had returned to thoughts of producing a Holocaust movie, following the publication of Begley’s *Wartime Lies*. What is clear from the above is that Kubrick had a persistent desire to produce a Holocaust film, a motivation that went beyond some of his more speculative projects as outlined by the likes of Filippo Ulivieri (2017) and Peter Krämer (2017b).

Parallel to Kubrick’s interest in producing a Holocaust film, Steven Spielberg was also exploring a potential picture on the subject. *Variety* reported in May 1989 that Martin Scorsese was to direct *Schindler’s List* for release by Universal in 1990 and to be

produced by Spielberg's Amblin (Dawes 1989: 34). Spielberg had been developing *Schindler's List* since the early 1980s, adapted from Thomas Keneally's novel *Schindler's Arc* (1982) by Steven Zaillian (Anon. 1990a: 12). Kubrick would presumably have been aware of Spielberg's interest in developing *Schindler's Arc* given the two had initiated a friendship in the late 1970s. Telephone calls were frequent between the pair and one must suppose that a discussion of the book came up. Kubrick also kept up-to-date with industry news, including competitor studios, and would have more than likely seen the announcement in 1989 that Spielberg had convinced Scorsese to direct *Schindler's List*. The two also shared a preoccupation with twentieth century history and the Holocaust that informed their work (Russell 2007: 78).

A new Kubrick production company, Hobby Films, was incorporated on 1 September 1989, registered to Pinewood Studios (Anon. 1989). The incorporation of the company indicated that Kubrick was potentially gearing up to move into production on a new project. This was more than likely *A.I.*, which is discussed further below. But following the release of Begley's *Wartime Lies*, it was reported in 1991 that Kubrick was working on a screenplay for Warner Bros. (Groves 1991: 91). Little was known about the project, beyond that he was working on a script, nor did any of Kubrick's colleagues or any Warner Bros. executives seem to know much about the project (91). What is clear is that Kubrick needed to get a project into production soon; he had signed a contract with Warner Bros. in 1985 to produce three films for them, starting with *Full Metal Jacket* (Anon. 1985: 52). Work on the script of *Aryan Papers* coincided with the uncertainty of whether *Schindler's List* would go into production, which once more had halted by 1991 (Natale and Kissinger 1991: 53). In contrast, Kubrick had completed an extended treatment of *Aryan Papers* by June 1992 (Kubrick 1992a), with a further draft treatment completed by October 1992, this time including camera annotations as he began to think about moving into production. The treatment ran to 126 pages and included 208 scenes, along with a prologue and epilogue. The prologue was headed as, 'The Final Solution...' and scrawled next to it in Kubrick's hand the word 'stock' – he was to use documentary stock footage for this sequence, and would feature such footage throughout the picture (Kubrick 1992c).

With a completed treatment (though, it would continue to be adapted and reworked over the next year) and with *Schindler's List* in development hell, pre-

production for *Aryan Papers* was initiated, with Jan Harlan leading the logistics. Harlan worked for over a year in preparing the production, scouting for locations in central and Eastern Europe, and commencing casting and auditions. Harlan has said that he had gone so far as to arrange a deal with the Brno city council to ‘put Nazi flags up on a weekend, close the city centre for a weekend to copy Warsaw [...] To have trams from the tram museum there. We were that far-gone, we had spent a lot of money’ (Appendix I). But as preproduction on *Aryan Papers* progressed, it became apparent that Kubrick had doubts, with his need to have every outcome available to his decision making frustrating the production process. Major Hollywood actors were being cast for the film, only for Kubrick to abruptly change his mind, writing to International Creative Management’s Jeffrey Berg in December 1992 to tell him:

You know I think “x” is not only a major star but also one of the best actresses in the world. I love her work! But as I get close to finishing the script, I am truly embarrassed to have to say that I am no longer confident she is absolutely right for the part. This is of course one of those intangible assessments that drive people crazy, but until I can eliminate some of my doubts, I don’t think it would be good to meet. I do sincerely apologise for this. (Kubrick 1992b)

Such indecision by Kubrick was slowing preproduction and by January 1993 *Variety* was reporting *Schindler’s List* as being in production, to be directed by Spielberg and slated for release that same year (Fleming and Brennan 1993: 83). This did not prevent Kubrick and Warner Bros. announcing, three months after *Schindler’s List* had entered production, that filming of *Aryan Papers* was to go ahead in the summer of 1993, with a scheduled release of Christmas 1994 (Klady 1993: 24b). But there was clearly hesitation, with no obvious shooting schedule or a script in place. Joseph Mazzello had tentatively been cast in the lead role (following completion of *Jurassic Park*). But even the deal with Mazzello was somewhat vague, with his agent Scott Henderson saying only that there was a ‘commitment to his client and that they had been told to keep his summer schedule clear. However, neither he nor his client had seen a script’ (24b).

Harlan has said that, with regards to Kubrick abandoning *Aryan Papers*, that, ‘the time frame for Steven [Spielberg] was so fast, and we are so slow. He would have been out before us, that was the key. Never mind details, the key thing is we would have followed *Schindler’s List*’ (2016). And yet, despite this assertion, development of the project continued throughout 1993, with Spielberg in Eastern Europe filming

*Schindler's List* at the same time that Harlan was in the region arranging the logistics of *Aryan Papers*. Kubrick seemed to be following in the footsteps of Spielberg; casting actors he had used in *Jurassic Park*, announcing his own Holocaust film in the trades after Spielberg, requesting to see Spielberg's Holocaust research (Lucky and Fritz 1993), looking to film *Aryan Papers* in Eastern Europe like Spielberg, and even eventually considering producing Spielberg as director of *A.I.*

Far from the project slowing down, in the months after *Schindler's List* went into production, preproduction on *Aryan Papers* gathered pace. The scale of *Aryan Papers* was becoming a visual spectacle to rival Kubrick's abandoned *Napoleon*. He had tasked Phil Hobbs to find 1000 Mauser rifles, as well as Schmeisser sub machine guns, MG 34s and M/G 42s, and numerous Russian, German and Polish artillery (Bapty and Co. 1993). The film was even to feature scenes of the Jewish ghettos in Warsaw being cleared. The grandeur of what Kubrick was envisioning required aerial filming, with specialist film pilots being approached (Paris 1993). Harlan scouted various Eastern European cities in which to base the production, with a focus on Bratislava in the newly formed Slovakia. Harlan outlined the intentions of the production to the Czech and Slovak American Enterprise Fund (CSAEF) based in the city. The CSAEF was established by the American Congress in 1989, one of several funds that were part of the US government's *Assistance to Eastern Europe under the Support for East European Democracy (SEED) Act* (1989). The aim of the SEED fund was to 'promote political democracy and economic pluralism' in Eastern Europe by aiding the development of their private business sectors (Senate Finance Committee 1989). The Kubrick production team was keen to make use of the services of CSAEF and the contacts they had within the Slovak Ministry of Culture. Pressure was applied to the Slovak government to allow the production to take place, describing the production as being an 'important' film (Senat 1993). Rick Senat, Warner Bros.'s vice-president of European Affairs, contacted the Slovak government to suggest that, should they allow Kubrick to set up the 'necessary company structure with satisfactory arrangements for VAT and exchange control' quickly, then Bratislava would become their production base (alternatives included Prague) (Senat 1993).

The fledgling capitalist economies of former Eastern Bloc countries, such as the Czech Republic, Slovakia, and Poland, were now looking to entice private business,

including film productions. *Variety* reported in August 1993 that there had been an increase in Hollywood productions in Eastern European countries and that, 'since the Iron Curtain came tumbling down, local production and service outfits have been aggressively marketing their countries' wares, both as a source of hard currency to plough back into local productions and of work to keep the newly privatised studios turning over (Richardson 1993: 28). Basing an American production in central or Eastern Europe had the potential to cost forty per cent less than in the West and the likes of Poland (the best actors), the Czech Republic and Slovakia (the best locations), and Hungary (the best technical services) were vying for foreign film shoots (Richardson 1993: 28). Spielberg filmed *Schindler's List* in Poland in the first part of 1993, with 'all on-location services provided by [...] Heritage Films' and \$9 million of the film's \$25 million budget spent in the country (28). Following the completion of *Schindler's List*, Film Polski placed a full-page advert in *Variety* with the headline, 'Poland, Your Next Great Filming Adventure', quoting Spielberg as saying that filming in Krakow had been the 'greatest directing experience' of his career (Anon. 1993: 24). The governments of some of these countries were willing to 'contribute up to 50% of a film's costs, depending on the size of the budget', with money accrued from big budget Hollywood productions being reinvested into their respective film studios (Richardson 1993: 28). There were also distinct tax advantages to filming in a country such as Slovakia, hence the Kubrick production team's and Warner Bros.'s pressure on the Slovak government. Price Waterhouse advised Jan Harlan that Kubrick's production company, Hobby Films, 'would not be required to register for commercial or tax purposes in the country and will accordingly not be subject to direct tax on any profits' (Nissler 1993).

What followed throughout the late spring and the summer of 1993 was an increasingly frustrated preproduction process, purposely being held up by Kubrick due to indecision over the matter of where to base the production. Despite the fact that Harlan and Warner Bros. had started to negotiate deals for *Aryan Papers* to be filmed in Slovakia, it became increasingly obvious to Harlan that Kubrick was not prepared to commit himself. A production document entitled 'Essential steps to be taken now on the assumption that we will stick to a September 6 start date' – most likely compiled by Harlan and Philip Hobbs in early May 1993 – highlights the key problems standing in the way of an anticipated September shoot, in order for the film to meet Warner Bros.'s

release date of Christmas 1994. A timetable was in place that included Harlan meeting with ministers in the Slovakian government, John Trehy, the production accountant, breaking down the script and preparing a budget, and the preparation of precise prop lists. The most important hurdle to overcome was left to the end of the document however:

May 20/21 - SK to decide whether he wishes to view Slovakia locations before commitment is made; if SK wants to see the locations he should travel no later than May 24. In order to start filming on September 6 a firm commitment has to be made by 28 May for engagement of essential personnel, studio contract, application for permits. (Harlan n.d.)

The timetable set out was important given that there was, in theory, only fourteen weeks until production commenced. This involved the incorporation of yet another new production company, Albatross. This was put on hold, however, on 20 May 1993 when Jan Harlan contacted lawyers at S.J. Berwin and Co. to say:

It seems contradictory I know, but do wait please with the filing of the papers until you receive a further confirmation. Today's hold-up is not the rental price for an office at Koliba! We have encountered a more fundamental problem and I must clear this up first. (Harlan 1993b)

The fundamental problem was that Kubrick had raised his doubts about basing the production in Bratislava, and was now, in Harlan's words, 'more interested in Brno than Bratislava' (Harlan 1993c). It is not entirely clear why Kubrick was motivated toward basing the production in the Czech Republic; after all, it was reported that productions costs in the country were much higher in comparison to other Eastern European countries, with prices for location work in the country 'rapidly rising' (Richardson 1993: 28). Harlan was also making enquiries with other European studios, including the Rosenhugel Studios in Vienna. But the frustrations suffered by Harlan in Kubrick's persistent u-turns (who once more, by the end of May, had shown interest in Bratislava) was beginning to show in a memo he wrote to him on 30 May 1993:

You said that there are no good locations in Slovakia and that everything is better in Brno, and Roy said the same. You don't want to build sets at Koliba and if you do want to build anything we seem to get what we need in Brno. Why Bratislava? I like to understand. You can have a house in Austria in either case – would a house be the factor which decides whether we start in Bratislava and move to Brno later or not? (Harlan 1993a)

By the end of 1993, preproduction and the project as a whole was put on indefinite hold. Even the author Louis Begley was kept in the dark as to the status of the project. Begley's agent contacted Harlan in March 1994 to enquire as to the 'details of any production plans for Louis Begley's *Wartime Lies*. The author is anxious to know what is happening with the project' (Cox 1994). Harlan has insisted that the project was aborted due to *Schindler's List* entering production (Appendix II). Yet preproduction continued into September and October of 1993, several weeks before the US premiere of *Schindler's List* on 30 November. Therefore, this idea that it was *Schindler's List* that led to the cancellation of *Aryan Papers* is not wholly convincing.

What is clear from the above brief overview of the problematic attempts to produce *Aryan Papers* is that Kubrick was delaying the process, unsure of where to film (by September, Philip Hobbs was scouting locations in Denmark), as well having no firm script, only a treatment. Kubrick had a commitment to complete two more films for Warner Bros. and the company executives were keen to see a new Kubrick project released. Harlan goes on to suggest that Terry Semel phoned Kubrick and asked him to put *Aryan Papers* on hold, telling Kubrick, 'Let's postpone it. What Warner Bros. was much more interested in anyway was that Stanley should do *A.I. Artificial Intelligence*' (Harlan 2016). What the development of *Aryan Papers* and *A.I.* shows is that Kubrick's 'exploratory' process (as Krämer 2015c refers to it) was one that led to indecision and made it increasingly unlikely any of these ambitious pictures would ever be produced. His methods saw him investigate the budgetary, logistical and technical possibilities of making a film, as well as testing the originality of his vision. If any of these criteria, particularly the latter, should fail to pass his own standards, the project would be abandoned. Absolute producing power led Kubrick to exacting strict quality controls over what projects he ultimately gave the seal of being 'A Stanley Kubrick Production'.

## **Conclusion**

This chapter has explored how Kubrick's slowing down in his film output from the 1970s onwards was a direct result of his total filmmaking power, as well as the impact of his producing model on the super producers that now dominated the box office. Kubrick had become the total filmmaker by the 1970s, a producer who yielded absolute creative and business control over his films, with the financial support of Warner Bros.



The power he had accrued and the style of independent producing was soon being emulated by other filmmakers from the mid-1970s onwards. But Kubrick slowed in his output both as a result of this total control that he had accrued and also because the new super producers, like Steven Spielberg and George Lucas, were producing blockbusters that he was in awe of and wanted to replicate their financial success. However, he also wanted to avoid any kind of imitation of box office trends and of his own work. Consequently, Kubrick found himself taking ever longer to find a story worth taking out of development and putting into active production.

Kubrick was a modernist film producer who wanted to explore the medium of cinema and his own aesthetic and intellectual concerns. Total filmmaking power and continued moderate success at the box office afforded him the time (and indulgence) to explore projects to understand their potential as Kubrick films. He has himself commented how a 'good story suitable for making into a film is so rare, subject matter is secondary' (Quoted in Phillips 2002: 180). His reading company, Emphyrean, exemplified this approach, a company that not so much scouted property to acquire it (the Spielberg approach), but rather sifted out material that wasn't worthy of Kubrick's attention. Kubrick also felt that market research conducted by studios was redundant, if not counterintuitive, packaging films on what they believe audiences want and in the process trying to avoid 'the problems associated with making a good film' (181). Kubrick had to find a way of moving beyond trends. His was a brand of cinema that deconstructed genre and refashioned it afresh, an expectation he became increasingly aware of, stating in a number of interviews for the release of *Full Metal Jacket* that his films were often misjudged by critics because 'they're expecting something else' (174). Jan Harlan summed up Kubrick's producing methods by the 1980s as being guided by his own standards of quality: 'It was never, 'ah it's not too bad, let's do it', forget that, it wasn't Kubrick [...] The main thing was that *he* had to like what he did' (Appendix II).

## Conclusion

July 2017 saw the release of Christopher Nolan's *Dunkirk*, and with it came the latest inevitable comparisons between the director and Stanley Kubrick. *The Guardian's* Andrew Pulver (2017) suggested that Nolan had 'put himself in the Kubrick league' with *Dunkirk*, while other critics similarly raised the comparison, with Sean Hutchinson suggesting that Nolan was an auteur like Kubrick and that *Dunkirk* 'is the type of movie every major auteur of a certain mold needs to make' (2017). Nolan is not the only director in recent years to have been compared to Kubrick (think Paul Thomas Anderson, Darren Aronofsky, or David Fincher). Yet the comparison between Nolan and Kubrick is perhaps the most frequent, particularly in the wake of his science fiction blockbuster *Interstellar* (2014), without doubt an ode to *2001: A Space Odyssey*, a fact Nolan made clear in interviews (Collins 2014). Perhaps where this comparison finds any kind of validation is in Nolan's powerful producing style and his relationship with Warner Bros. He is a rarity in Hollywood in his unique ability to maintain blockbuster budgets and combine them with his own personal aesthetic vision. As the *Wall Street Journal* noted, Nolan's *Interstellar* was 'highly unusual' given its budget of \$165 million and yet not being adapted from any kind of literary property, suggesting that the previous time Hollywood had invested such a high budget in a non-franchise film was four years previous with Nolan's *Inception* (2010) (Fritz 2014). Nolan has been awarded such privilege by Warner Bros. due to his ability to 'combine box office success with artistic ambition' with the studio providing him 'with all the benefits of a studio deal with no strings attached' (Fritz 2014).

Such an arrangement immediately brings to mind that between Kubrick and Warner Bros. and it is here that the comparison between Nolan and Kubrick is actually pertinent. It is perhaps also evidence of Kubrick's lasting legacy as a producer and the way he impacted upon the producing model. When asked in an interview with Tim Cahill why he thought he had managed to obtain the level of autonomy that he had by the 1970s, Kubrick replied that, 'I'd like to think it's because my films have a quality that holds up on second, third, and fourth viewing. Realistically, it's because my

budgets are within reasonable limits and the films do well' (Kubrick quoted in Phillips 2002: 189).

Kubrick certainly became ever more mindful of the need to position his films within a commercial context if he was to maintain the kinds of budgets he had grown accustomed to. Indeed, as Robert Sklar has suggested, Kubrick 'had hopes of competing in the same arena with the likes of Spielberg and Lucas' (1988: 123). Sklar ended his article by asking whether Kubrick's desire to marry 'aesthetic achievement' with 'fiscal responsibility' 'has produced the longest period without a film in Stanley Kubrick's career?' (123). My response to Sklar would be that it wasn't so much that Kubrick struggled due to the changing circumstances of distribution and the move to saturation releasing. After all, films such as *The Shining* and *Full Metal Jacket* were both notable successes, particularly so *Full Metal Jacket*, which had grossed over \$40 million after just two months on release (boxofficemojo.com). Rather, and as discussed in Chapters Five and Six, Kubrick's accrual of authority and power as a producer afforded the time (whether for good or bad) to develop unique pictures that fed into the wider Kubrick brand of cinema. This meant a lengthy search for new literary material from which to adapt his next picture and collaborations with writers, cinematographers, actors, and art directors to find distinctive new ways of telling a story.

As indicated at the beginning of this thesis, Sklar's article was a key motivator in the instigation of the project. Sklar pointed out that Kubrick's role within and relationship to the American film industry had been neglected by scholarly inquiry despite being 'enmeshed' within the structures of the film business (1988: 114). He also laid two key avenues for potential research. First, the idea that Kubrick was central to the transformation of business practices in the film industry since the 1950s (115). And second, that Kubrick's filmmaking strategies were invariably impacted to varying degrees by industrial constraints (115). To this end, this thesis responded to Sklar's article by raising the following questions: what was Stanley Kubrick's role as a producer? How did the role of the producer change throughout the course of his career? And in what ways did Kubrick impact or change the role?

Kubrick's rise to become one of the most powerful independent producers by the 1970s and his subsequent affiliation with Warner Bros., which saw him gain the legal authority over his productions that he long sought, was not an easy one. He

commenced his career producing his own low-budget features in a style that saw him operating outside of the mainstream of Hollywood and, given the limited budget and time, this impacted on the aesthetic of films such as *Fear and Desire* and *Killer's Kiss*. The necessity of the films led to Kubrick the producer having to negotiate deferments, discounts and other means to ensure the films were completed. His abilities and business acumen in being able to sense the shifting industrial ground underway in the American film industry saw him able to exploit art house distribution and potential television distribution for *Fear and Desire*, as well as sell *Killer's Kiss* to a major film company, United Artists, who supported a range of low-budget independent producers.

Hollywood was transitioning into a new independent mode of production during the 1950s, which saw producers now packaging and selling their product to studios that in return financed and distributed them. As Chapters Two and Three argue, this opened up a space for both artistic and business control for independent producers, which Kubrick was able to exploit during his partnership with James B. Harris. Though Harris was credited as the producer of HKPC, in effect this was a producing partnership that saw the pair develop a working relationship that influenced one another. Together this saw the company able to diversify and develop a brand, one associated with controversial and innovative films that broke boundaries; think of the heated reaction to *Paths of Glory* in Europe, or the scandalous nature of *Lolita*. United Artists and other companies such as Bryna Productions may have been minded to attempt to control Kubrick, but he was determined to gain authority over his pictures, demanding outrageous deals that led to Harris and Kubrick producing *Lolita* without any distribution arrangement. They also demonstrated how independent producers had to move beyond being labelled within one genre category, to become a brand, and to internationalise their productions (filming *Paths of Glory* and *Lolita* in Europe). Kubrick also established a producing pattern that would last for the remainder of his career during this period, persistently adapting literary property into films as well as optioning new books as part of an independent producing strategy to ensure a steady flow of output.

Kubrick's key impact on the role of the producer came in the 1960s with the formation of his independent production companies, Polaris Productions and Hawk Films. Kubrick used these to leverage further power for himself, particularly in areas of

publicity, merchandising and distribution. As Chapter Four demonstrates, with the changes in modes of production in Hollywood seeing the package-unit system dominate by the beginning of the decade, the major studios attempted to consolidate their power (and minimise financial risk) by growing their publicity and exploitation departments. Contracts with independent producers saw them willing, to an extent, to give up artistic control of the production, but retaining authority over the promotion and distribution of the film. Producers were only granted consultancy rights. This was not an area Kubrick was willing to compromise on and he used his production company, Polaris, to gain influence over the promotion and exploitation process of *2001: A Space Odyssey*. This led to an unprecedented campaign for the film compared to the industrial norm of the time (particular for a picture of its budget), with the campaign only being fully launched a month prior to the film's release. The tension between the studios and the independent producers was now pronounced and revealed how the producer was vital in every aspect of a picture's production to ensure its commercial success, particularly a producer as artistically ambitious as Kubrick.

Despite the exalted position *2001* holds within both Kubrick's career and cinematic history, it did not immediately equate to Kubrick becoming the absolute dominant producer one might expect. Turbulent industrial conditions within Hollywood meant that Kubrick had become a financial risk, with his *Napoleon* project being dropped or rejected by the likes of MGM and United Artists, two companies that had given him favourable conditions in the past. As Kubrick himself has commented, 'up until *A Clockwork Orange*, there wasn't a single producer who was prepared to produce my films. For example, MGM only took on *2001* at the last minute; no one wanted it' (Kubrick quoted in Heymann 2016: 737). This perhaps reflects Kubrick's decision to choose *A Clockwork Orange* as his next feature, financed by Warner Bros. As Chapter Five argues, the film fed into the new policy direction of Warners to release low-budget, youth orientated pictures. In return, Kubrick was allowed not only input over publicity, exploitation *and* distribution, but was also given overall strategic authority. This was his first true opportunity to establish fully his own producing brand and to demonstrate his ability to sell his own films. The subsequent success of *A Clockwork Orange* led Warner Bros. to proclaim that Kubrick was a visionary independent producer that had confirmed the viability of his producing model in blending art house sensibilities with

wider commercial appeal and industrial trends. As a result, Kubrick was afforded the machinery of blockbuster marketing and financing to support his own intellectual and aesthetic concerns. He had become the total filmmaker, acquiring the full responsibilities and authority of the producer that once resided with the studios and allowing him to explore the artistic potential of each of his films. Other new emerging super-producers replicated the model, as the New Hollywood experimented with films that would appeal to a changing demographic. Director-producers like Steven Spielberg, George Lucas, and Francis Ford Coppola all developed personal visions alongside unique producing brands.

Market conditions changed still further in the 1980s and 1990s, with producer branding becoming ever more central (Grantham and Miller 2016: 131-132), and movie franchises increasingly dominating, to the point that by the turn of the century, producing power largely returned once more to the studios, with directors as ‘hired hands’ of these event movies (Fritz 2014). This led to Kubrick’s position as independent producer looking rather precarious and uncertain by the 1990s and with a gap of twelve years between *Full Metal Jacket* and *Eyes Wide Shut*. However, Kubrick still retained the power and authority he had established thirty-years previously, mainly as a result of the Kubrick brand, one that developed ever more mystique given his absence from cinema screens. *Variety* published a piece on Kubrick labelled ‘Missing Persons Corner’ (Groves 1991: 91) that queried Kubrick’s absence and highlighted the Kubrick brand by stating that he ‘cranks out a masterpiece every five to seven years’ (91). It was this brand that saw him gain equal star billing as his two leading stars in *Eyes Wide Shut*. It demonstrated how a Kubrick film in itself was an event picture, just like the major dominating franchise films such as *Star Wars*. Unfortunately, a combination of misplaced marketing, mixed reviews, and censorship issues in the USA saw the film take domestic grosses of \$55 million off the back of a budget of \$65 million (boxofficemojo.com). Despite having seriously considered a science fiction blockbuster with *A.I. Artificial Intelligence*, even proposing that he produce it with Spielberg as a director (merging their brands as well as his own artistic appeal with Spielberg’s commercial potential), Kubrick had instead chosen an ultimately personal film that went against the industrial conditions of the time (the new epics, science fiction, fantasy, and

superhero films). Perhaps sensing his own slow output and relying on his brand to sell the film, *Eyes Wide Shut* was at a remove from a now franchise-dominated Hollywood.

This was indicative of how obtaining absolute producing control could be dangerous. Arguably, the more legal authority Kubrick was granted over his pictures, the more he was able to indulge his worse excesses as a producer. Kubrick would request all available outcomes from his colleagues before he made a decision (McAvoy 2015: 294). While this may have led to a unique aesthetic style, it also led to a situation in the latter half of his career where he struggled to produce and release pictures, at times putting him behind cinematic trends (*Barry Lyndon* through to *Eyes Wide Shut* seemingly all ‘out of time’ on their original release (Pramaggiore 2015: 15)). This was compensated on set, however, by reducing budget costs and the size of his film crew in order to ‘shoot for a long time’ (Brian Cook quoted in McAvoy 2015: 294).

Kubrick’s impact on the role of the producer was to create a model that proved it was possible to straddle art and commerce. He demonstrated how it made commercial sense for a producer-director to be in absolute control of every facet of their production, right through to distribution, in order to sell their own brand of cinema. And though Hollywood now largely relies on ‘already-popular, ensemble, multi-generic formats with built-in, tested appeal’ (Grantham and Miller 2016: 137), there remains an outlet for independent producers to develop their own brand within a commercial context along the lines of the Kubrick model. This returns us to the start of this chapter and to Christopher Nolan, who has adopted this model. Key to this has been Nolan’s ability to bring his pictures in on or often under budget, and on time (Fritz 2014), similar to how Kubrick from *A Clockwork Orange* onwards would ensure fiscal responsibility as part of his strategy to ensure the longevity of his influence over Warner Bros.

This doctoral thesis set out to situate Kubrick and his role as a producer, and impact he had on that role, within the wider context of the American film industry. The research methodology, taking a case study approach, is equally applicable to other film producers and within Producer Studies as a whole. As the field of Producer Studies progresses, drawing on the methodological tools of the New Film History, it allows us to further understand the economic constraints on film production and the ever-present tension between film as art and film as commerce. The implications for Kubrick Studies I would suggest are of huge importance. Kubrick was not a filmmaker operating in

some kind of hermetically sealed bubble in St. Albans, as the image of him is sometimes presented. Instead he was a film director, producer and, yes, artist, working against, reacting to, and influencing the industry he worked within. There are further avenues for research within such contexts then, with the historiography on Kubrick needing to fully realign and take account of his place as a film producer in a commercially orientated industry and to consider the wide-ranging archival material that is now available. Kubrick's influence as a producer able to blend artistic ambition with commercial appeal will remain his lasting legacy.

**Word Count: 86, 276**



# **Appendix I:**

## **Transcript of Interview with James B. Harris**

Date: 23 March 2016

Participants: James B Harris (JBH) (Los Angeles, USA), James Fenwick (JF) (Leicester, UK)

JF: Would you mind if I record this?

JBH: Of course, I think it be better. At least you would have it as exactly as I'm saying it and it would be easier for you and it makes no difference to me.

JF: Excellent.

JBH: Recording it, that's fine.

JF: Thank you very much. What I'll do with the interview is I'll type it up as a transcript. Kicking off with the questions then, the first two questions I've got are about Flamingo Films, which is going right back to the start of your career and I just wondered if you could briefly tell me about Flamingo Films. What exactly was this company and what were you doing there?

JBH: That company was formed to distribute films to television. In those days, television was just getting started and I had previously been working with a distribution company for theatrical films and I saw that the grosses were starting to fall off and that television was becoming more popular and I knew that the television stations would need programming. In those days, there wasn't any cable that connected all of the stations that they have now. I mean you have networks where something is broadcast in New York and is picked up all over the country. In those days the stations were not connected by cable and then for a company called Kinescopes, they would make a

Kinescope of the show and send it to the affiliate stations and they would run it three days later or four days later, which meant that all of those stations needed programming to fill in between the programmes they might be getting from the major networks.

JF: Yeah.

JBH: I assume you're familiar with ABC, NBC, CBS?

JF: Yeah, yeah.

JBH: So I guess perceiving that the industry was starting to look more to TV for its income from film I had this idea about acquiring the rights to television, TV rights, to short subjects, cartoons, serials, feature films, and that's when, together with a friend of mine, David L. Wolper, a schoolmate of mine in high school, we formed Flamingo Films. My father was one of the partners, and a friend of my brothers was another partner. So there was the four of us that formed Flamingo Films, which was named Flamingo because Wolper and I as young guys had stayed at the Flamingo Hotel in Las Vegas. We were very impressed by the glamour. And so we decided to call our company Flamingo Films. And that's the genesis of how that happened. And it became very successful because there wasn't any competition. There were very few companies that were distributing films to television at that time.

JF: Yes, and I noticed in *Variety*, the trade journal *Variety*, that they referred to you and one of your partners you were working with as boy wonders in the industry at that time.

JBH: Yeah. It was a problem for me as I was travelling around the country and I wasn't really old enough to sign the contracts. You had to be twenty-one to sign the contract for it to be binding. But I didn't tell anybody that I was under twenty-one, although I looked about fifteen. So I never went to college. I briefly attended Julliard School of Music for a short period of time, realising I was never going to be a professional musician. I just didn't have that much talent. So I started working, you know, when I was seventeen. And so I was able not to waste my time in college, which would have

been a complete waste of time for me, and learnt the film business, distributing films at that time.

JF: Yeah. So at what point did you decide to leave Flamingo Films? And obviously, you came into contact with Kubrick, so how did this come about, the meeting with Kubrick and so forth?

JBH: Well, what happened was that being just at the right age to be drafted into the army, which happened during the conflict with Korea, and so having a successful run with Flamingo Films, which was interrupted by two years in the army, which because of being in the film business I was able to get into the film unit in the signal corps and when I was in the signal corps I guess I made friends through one of the other soldiers, in the same outfit, and his name was Alex Singer.

JF: Oh right, yes.

JBH: And Alexander Singer was a boyhood friend of Stanley Kubrick, which he started to tell me about and since Alex and I were now getting involved in film in the army, we were experimenting with little short subjects and things like that, he brought his friend around one day to watch us and that was Stanley Kubrick, who at that time had done three short subjects and a feature film called *Fear and Desire*. And so I briefly met Stanley whilst I was still in the army. But when I finished my tour of duty, after two years, I went back to distributing films to television. And, you know, I went back to pick up from where I left off. And I ran into Kubrick in the street in New York City and he told me since he'd seen me a year before he had done another film, which was called *Killer's Kiss* and he was going to have a screening and he invited me to the screening. And I attended the screening and I was very impressed with the fact that this young fella, who is only eight days older than myself, so he was pretty young at that time, had accomplished all of this. It didn't really matter how good or bad the films were, it was the fact that he was able to get them made, you know.

JF: Yeah.

JBH: And I had seen *Fear and Desire* and now *Killer's Kiss* to me seemed a step upwards in terms of, you know, appreciating the film. And Stanley said to me, I understand you're in the television-distribution industry and I'd like to talk to you about distributing *Fear and Desire* for television. So I said, why don't you come to the office the next day and we'll work out a deal. When he came to the office he was embarrassed, and the man who had distributed the film theatrically, a man named Joe Burstyn, had died in a plane crash.

JF: Wow.

JBH: And *Fear and Desire* was tied up in the courts because lawyers had to adjudicate his will and all of that and, I mean, he couldn't give me a clear release on *Fear and Desire*, which meant we had nothing to talk about at that point. And so I asked him what he had been doing, and he said the film you saw last night, I've sold it to United Artists for \$75,000 and they said to me that the door is open for anything else I want to do along those lines. So at that point I was disenchanted with travelling and selling on the road films for television and I thought this might be an opportunity for doing something I've always wanted to do and that's produce movies.

JF: Yeah.

JBH: So I asked Stanley, at this point do you have anything going on and he said absolutely nothing in hopes of making another film. So I said, why don't we team up, I just want to leave this business that I'm in and become a producer and he thought, I guess he perceived me as someone who could be helpful in terms of financing and acquiring rights to books and to things that didn't require him to do everything that he did on his first two films.

JF: Yeah.

JBH: And so we just decided that we'd become partners. I'd be the producer and he'd be the director. We'd be equal partners and we shook hands. The only thing was what do we do now? So after, after work that day, I went to a bookstore on Fifth Avenue in New York called Scribner's and I started looking at the books in the mystery and western section. I saw a book called *Clean Break*, which was about a robbery of a racetrack. I bought the book and read it overnight and gave it to Stanley the next day telling him that this would make a good movie. And you know I think if I gave him the phone book he would have said let's do it. He was so anxious to get into action again.

JF: Yeah.

JBH: But, you know, Stanley had a terrific sense of story, of what could make a good film.

JF: Yeah.

JBH: And so he read it, he was a fast reader, he read it in a couple of hours, and he said lets do it and so I found out I could acquire the rights, which I did. Cost me \$10,000 and I acquired the film rights to this book, *Clean Break*, and we went running to United Artists, which supposedly had the door open and they said, well, why don't you guys do a screenplay and show it to us. I figured, wow, this is great. When I tell my father we have a deal with United Artists, he says, you know, that deal is available anywhere. They're not paying you to write the script, they're not giving you the money back for the rights, you know, this is like if I ask you to go out in the street and look for money in the gutter, and I'll give you fifty per cent of everything you find. My dad being a businessman, you know, this made me aware of the fact that I had this deal that was available at every studio in existence and so, anyway, we did develop the script. Stanley brought to my attention a man named Jim Thompson, who Stanley thought was a terrific crime writer at the time and so I became familiar with him. And we hired Jim Thompson to work with us on the screenplay. When we finished the screenplay we took it to United Artists and they liked the screenplay and they said, you know, see if you can get us a star. You know, it's the same deal all over: they're investing nothing and

they're sending us out to try and put a package together and bring it to them. I didn't know any better, but I figured at least somebody was interested.

JF: Yeah.

JBH: So we boxed up the scripts and we sent them out to California, to the same agent that I had acquired the film rights to the book. It was called the Jaffe Agency at that time. And with a list of people we thought would be good to play the lead. In those days, they had these terrific B pictures that usually played on the second bill of the double bill, and they had stars like Sterling Hayden and, you know, they were a terrific bunch of actors. So we had this whole list of...Steve Cochran, do you remember that name?

JF: I've come across that name, yes.

JBH: Yeah, anyway, you know, there may be a dozen of them on the list. And we got a call-back a couple of weeks later from Sterling Hayden's agent saying he liked it very much but he didn't know who this Stanley Kubrick was that says he's going to direct it. He says Stanley Kramer? No, no, this is Stanley Kubrick. So I did the best pitch job I could do explaining that Stanley was this budding filmmaker that someday is going to be the best. I tell them anything to get them to do the job.

[Laughter]

JBH: When I took it to United Artists, they said Sterling Hayden, we have him in Westerns that we're selling for \$25 flat rentals, why don't you get a star? And, you know, we were very excited about Sterling, because he had done *The Asphalt Jungle*, the John Huston film. I mean we thought what better credentials could an actor have? So anyway, they said they could get us Victor Mature in a year and a half if we were willing to wait, maybe he would do it. I mean, tell two kids who are out to make a film that they have to wait a year and a half on the possibility that you might get somebody you didn't even think was right for the film.

JF: Yeah.

JBH: So we said, we want to do it with Sterling. So they said, we'll give you \$200,000 that's all. This'll be your budget. And this really gets into answering some of your other questions, doesn't it?

JF: Well yes it really does. In terms of, you just said that UA gave \$200,000 to the budget then, because I've been doing a lot of research at the Kubrick Archives down in London and I was just wondering at this stage, would you have been the person who was compiling the budget? And putting together a budget report?

JBH: Well, well, we took that information back, the fact that they would be willing to put up \$200,000, but that's all, right. They warned us, don't spend more than \$200,000 on this movie. And so we had a budget, we got hold of a production manager and we had a budget drawn up. It came to be something like \$330,000. And that was based, you know budgets are based on the schedule, you have to make a schedule, know how many days you're going to shoot, and then you know how much it is going to cost. So we had a twenty-four day schedule and that was going to cost \$330,000 and we told UA and they said, don't you dare spend it, or you're going to lose it, because we're only going to put up \$200,000. If you're going to put up the other \$130,000 you're going to be in second position to us, because we have to get our money back first, and you may lose it. Well, I had to, I had to make that decision. Do I want to take this chance and raise the money? I had saved up about \$80,000 from my, from my distribution days and I figured I could borrow another \$50,000 from my dad and put up the \$130,000 myself. UA warned me not to do it, but I figured, for \$200,000 we wouldn't make a picture that looked very good, you know, we'd have to rush through it, and Stanley, you know, we figured Stanley couldn't do his thing.

JF: Yeah.

JBH: And so I bit the bullet and came up with the \$130,000 and we moved to Hollywood because we couldn't find a racetrack back east that would co-operate with us. So we took the script and moved it to California and UA then recommended a production manager that we could use out there. His name was Clarence Eurist, E-U-R-I-S-T. You know, and he, we find the budget, you know, and it stayed at \$330,000 and twenty-four days and we had Sterling Hayden at that point for \$40,000. Stanley was totally knowledgeable about all of the actors, you know, he had seen every picture made probably, and he knew all about this terrific cast that we put together, you know, with Elisa Cook Jr., and, oh God, Ted de Corsia, Jay C. Flippen, you know the whole cast.

JF: Yeah, yeah, fantastic cast.

JBH: Yeah, it wasn't called *The Killing* at that time, that was when we finished the film and that's what UA decided to call it. We decided to call it...oh...

JF: I've seen something, *Bed of Fear*?

JBH: *Bed of Fear*, yeah.

JF: I've come across that, yeah.

JBH: You know, and our screenplay, you know what a legal size pad looks like?

JF: Yes.

JBH: When you open the pages up, whereas with a clip you open them sideways.

JF: Yes.

JBH: Our script opened up like a like a legal pad, totally different

[Laughter]



JBH: Totally different to what they were use to seeing.

JF: Yeah. So would you say that you and Kubrick saw *The Killing* as like a calling card to Hollywood?

JBH: Well, we just wanted, first of all, we just wanted to make a movie. And secondly, we wanted to make a good movie. And we loved the book because the book's structure was this flashback arrangement, where you follow each participant up to this race and then you go back and pick up another participant and see what he does. And there were about four different participants that caused the structure to work in flashback form, which I thought was unique and, you know, haven't seen anything like that, and so we thought we were going to make a very interesting crime movie. You know it's funny, fools or where angels fear to tread, we never thought about failure, you know, we just didn't believe there was such a thing, so we went ahead and did the film and Stanley completed it in twenty-four days. He edited, you know we had an editor but Stanley really edited. He'd tell the other guy what to do and Stanley and I would go outside and throw a football around, you know waiting for the editor to show us what it looked like. But Stanley really edited the film and we then had a, United Artists arranged a preview, you know, they called them sneak previews because the people didn't know what they were going to be seeing.

JF: Oh right, yeah.

JBH: And we ran it in California. It was actually because people never knew what they were going to see, there was always a lot of walkouts, you know, once they saw it wasn't going to be a romantic film, or a musical, or you know, a light comedy, you know, a lot of people walked out. That's always a disappointment, you think they haven't even seen it yet and they're walking out. But everybody that saw the film at that point, that we knew, because we invited people that we knew, including Sterling Hayden and Sterling Hayden's agent, and they all thought that the film was a disappointment. They thought we'd made a huge mistake in not telling it as a straight line story, and, you know, if enough people tell you you're sick you should lie down,

and Stanley and I, you know, heard this from everybody, people that we were close to, and we figured, my god, could we have been wrong about this. So we went back to New York and we rented an editing room and we tore the film apart and tried to do it as a straight line and, after a while, we looked at each other and we thought we must be nuts to lose faith in what we believe in. I mean, this is why we acquired the rights to the book and this is the way to tell the story, so we put it back the way we liked it, which is the way you see it now. And turned it into United Artists, turned it into UA. And, you know, UA are so busy, they had so many projects that they didn't take this too seriously, so they ran it as a second feature with *Bandido* (1956), with Robert Mitchum, and it was very disappointing. So I think one of your questions you ask about what my position was with United Artists and distribution.

JF: Yes, yes.

JBH: Well, yeah, we had no position.

[Laughter].

JF: Ah ok.

JBH: They did what they wanted to do. You know, you get so many licenses for France, you know, for in those days, I don't know how it works today, but each company would get licenses for so many films that they could distribute, because I guess the French want to keep the French film industry from being overloaded with American and foreign films. So, they didn't want to give a license, they wanted those licenses for their bigger pictures. So they said they had a deal to sell it to the Sibirsky brothers, they were film distributors in France, but for \$10,000 and you know they felt that the contract with us was, they give you so many days to find a deal, then if you can't you approve their deal. So we had no facility to try to better the deal. And so they sold the film to France for \$10,000. Can you imagine?

JF: Wow.

JBH: And it was a big hit in France. So the Sibirsky brothers did quite well.

[Laughter]

JBH: But UA had bigger fish to fry, they didn't want to waste their rights on a little picture like *The Killing*. But what *The Killing* did was, like you said, it was a calling card.

JF: Yeah.

JBH: This film really caught on, not at the box office, but it caught on in Hollywood and everybody was really impressed with it. Particularly because we were so young. And we got written up in *Time* magazine and we were offered a deal at MGM, where Dore Schary was head of production at that point, and he loved *The Killing*. He brought us over to do a film and we wanted to do *Paths of Glory*, which we had in the meantime acquired the film rights to. But at MGM they had done *The Red Badge of Courage*, an anti-war film, and Dore Schary said absolutely not, you know, find something else to do. And Stanley was always a big fan of Stefan Zweig and, you know, Schnitzler.

JF: Yes, yeah.

JBH: And they owned a story by Stefan Zweig called *The Burning Secret*, which Stanley jumped on that, I mean he really wanted to do that. I'm getting a little adrift from your questions.

JF: It's great to listen to.

JBH: But it's the real stuff, you know, the real story. And Stanley had become a fan of a writer named Calder Willingham, who had written several books, and so he insisted on bringing Calder Willingham to work on the screenplay with Stanley. MGM said that

wasn't the deal, we were supposed to produce and direct and write the film ourselves for \$75,000. Can you imagine? This was 1956.

JF: Yeah.

JBH: For both of us to share \$75,000 to produce, direct and write the film and we had to do it in forty weeks or something like that. But that was the deal. And so we agreed to do it, but they finally agreed to allow Calder Willingham, we had to get him back from Ceylon where he was working on *The Bridge on the River Kwai* for Sam Spiegel.

JF: Yeah, yeah.

JBH: And, you know, we took so long to get to work on the screenplay and we kept Jim Thompson and put him to work on writing a draft of *Paths of Glory*, you know, sort of like moonlighting, which MGM eventually used as a vehicle to fire us, because Dore Schary got fired and they wanted to clear out everybody that he brought in, so they fired us as well. So we never did *The Burning Secret*, but at least we were developing *Paths of Glory* in the meantime.

JF: So, how did the deal progress from there and how did Kirk Douglas get involved?

JBH: Well we eventually finished the screenplay on *Paths of Glory*. Jim Thompson had done his thing, we kept Calder, who we'd brought out for *The Burning Secret*, and we kept Calder and had him do a draft with Stanley on *Paths of Glory*. Now we had a finished screenplay and we also had an agent at this point, and the agent asked us who are we going to want. To put the picture together we would have to get somebody attached, like a major name. And in those days you could get the script to actors without having to make a firm offer, like you do today. They won't even read the script unless it comes with a firm offer or a picture that's fully funded, it's so difficult now. But in those days, you could get the script to an actor and, you know, through the agent, and so we did. We sent it to Kirk Douglas and he loved the script and said yes I'll do it, except, I can't do it now as I'm committed to do a stage play in New York and once I finish

that, he said that could run a year, it could also flop, but anyway, he said he couldn't make the commitment until he was free. So we then tried everywhere, and we couldn't get any actors to agree to do it, everybody thought it was too downbeat, that there were no women in it, it was anti-war, which is not very glamorous. So we were very lucky when Kirk Douglas had some kind of falling out on the stage play and came back to us and said that he would agree to do it. So he had a house in Palm Springs, California, and his agent was Ray Stark at that time, who became a producer later on. Ray Stark was Douglas's agent and so with our agent, who was Ronnie Lubin, Stanley and I drove out to Palm Springs and had a meeting at Kirk Douglas's house, at which they made the most outrageous deal and we were so anxious to get him that we agreed to it. But we had to agree to do five films for his company.

JF: Yeah.

JBH: Of which, he would only be in two of them. The only good thing about it was that, we didn't have to do, he had no interest in *Paths of Glory*, in terms of any financial interest or any credit as a producer or anything. The only thing he insisted on was that we put the name of his company, Bryna Films, on the titles.

JF: Yeah.

JBH: But he was strictly an employee. We paid him \$200,000 and he went to work for us.

JF: So would *Paths of Glory* count as one of these five films that this contract talked about or was it separate then?

JBH: It was separate, separate. This was like a slave labour thing, five pictures, of which only two he would be in.

JF: Yeah.

JBH: And we knew our goal was to get out of this deal somehow, someway. We were not going to tie ourselves up. I mean, it's pretty much like a lifetime, I mean you did a picture every eighteen months, would take you about eight years to be free of it right.

[Laughter]

JBH: So anyway, we did *Paths of Glory* with Kirk and we our stock went way up. I mean, after *The Killing*, we were so accepted from an acceptance standpoint in Hollywood. When we came back with *Paths of Glory*, then we really, everybody was so excited, everybody wanted to work with us. Marlon Brando, who at that time was the, like the top actor in the world, came to us and said he was so impressed with our film that he wanted to go into business with us and make films with us, which we thought was, my god, this is really terrific.

JF: Yeah.

JBH: So we agreed to do that. You didn't ask any questions about *One-Eyed Jacks* (1961) or the things we had going with Marlon. Are you familiar with any of that?

JF: I am, yes, and how for instance, when Marlon eventually wanted to direct *One-Eyed Jacks* himself and so forth.

JBH: Yes, I'm not sure he wasn't devious in this, because we were to agree on what our picture would be and so everything Stanley and I presented to Marlon – we wanted to do a boxing picture, a fight picture – he didn't like anything we submitted to him and we didn't like anything he submitted to us, which I can't even remember if he did anything seriously. But one night he invited Stanley to dinner and told Stanley that he had a commitment to do a Western at Paramount that he wanted Stanley to help him do that commitment. The deal would be that Stanley would direct this western and that I would be looking then for projects to do with Marlon after they had finished it and it's not included in the deal to do the Western. I wasn't asked to be the producer or anything like that, I was delegated to be looking for material and properties that we could do with

Marlon after they did that. I think that Marlon really just wanted to direct the picture himself, but he needed someone to do the technical, you know, the setting up of the shots and all that stuff, you know, which Stanley could do. The only problem was he started to read this script to Stanley after dinner. They went back to Marlon's place and Stanley said I can't deal with this, you know, give me the script I'll read it, you know, don't read it to me. And Stanley called me after and said, we got a problem, you know, the script is terrible, what do we do? And so we decided that we wanted to keep the relationship with Marlon, we didn't know that he was so devious, so he said why don't we put it to him that if we can rewrite the script then Stanley will direct the picture and he agreed to that. So once again, he called in Calder Willingham and Calder and Stanley rewrote the script and when that was finished Marlon showed his true colours, you know, he had a big entourage of people that he would have meetings with. Some meetings he called and never showed up.

JF: Yeah.

JBH: And he would conduct these meetings like a school teacher, give everybody, give them ten minutes to put forth their views of whatever they were talking about and then cut them off at ten minutes and go onto the next person. Well, Stanley felt that this was getting to be an impossible situation and that he was never going to be able to work under these conditions with Marlon and so the whole idea was we can't quit because if you quit, you don't get paid. But if you get fired, they have to pay you off. That's a big difference.

JF: Right, yeah.

JBH: And Stanley was going to get \$100,000 to direct the film. So Stanley just made it impossible to work with and so they got rid of him, but they had to pay him. So we were done with Marlon at this point. That was the end of that. But three days later, now in the meantime whilst this is going on, I had acquired the rights to *Lolita*, you know, I had come across the book and got the rights to *Lolita*. So now we wanted to do *Lolita* but we had this problem about Kirk Douglas. You know, we don't want to let him get in

on *Lolita*, because that to us was really going to be once in a life time. You know, this was number one on the bestseller list, famous the world over, but three days later we get a call from Kirk Douglas that he's been shooting a picture called *Spartacus*, and he's been shooting for three days with Anthony Man and he doesn't like what he's getting and would we consider lending Stanley, lending him out to Kirk Douglas to direct *Spartacus*. And we figured, well, I figured this is a chance to renegotiate with Kirk on our deal, get him to leave *Lolita* and, you know, don't participate in that at all. And charge a \$100,000 to Stanley so we could get some money into the company, because Stanley kept a \$100,000 that he got from Marlon. He didn't put that in the company. But we did with the *Spartacus* money, that came into our company, and I renegotiated with Kirk and I get him to waive *Lolita*. And whilst Stanley was doing *Spartacus*, we got Nabokov to come back to California and write the screenplay.

JF: So when Kubrick was directing *Spartacus* was your attention mainly on *Lolita* and developing *Lolita*?

JBH: Yes, yeah, certainly was. We had an office, we had a bungalow actually, at Universal, we made that our office, and I worked out of there. We got a house for Nabokov in Mandeville Canyon, just on the way to the beach, and so he wrote the screenplay. But it was so unwieldy, you know, I mean you couldn't lift it, it was so heavy.

[Laughter]

JBH: So many pages, I mean it would have been like a four-hour film or something. So, we had that, but, you know, I wasn't able to raise the money to do *Lolita* yet. Anyway, I'm really drifting away from the specific questions, I hope I've answered some of them.

JF: I mean, a lot of what you are saying is answering the questions actually, but with *Lolita*, I'm quite interested in this issue of how you got it financed and the reasons for the UK and why you choose to film in the UK?



JBH: Yeah, ok, so now we have a script, but it's not really workable, it's too long and it needs to be trimmed down and it needs to be rewritten, really. Actually, we had Calder Willingham write the first draft of the script while Stanley was doing *Spartacus* and went over to Spain to do the battle scenes for *Spartacus*. Calder had completed the screenplay and sent it to us and I spoke to Stanley in Spain and he said he didn't like Calder's screenplay. I kind of liked it. I thought it was pretty good. But Stanley said, you know, we have to redo it, so when he came back we found we were able to get Nabokov, because we tried him originally, but he turned us down. Then he suddenly became available. I guess he needed the money or something, but he came to California. So anyway, while Stanley was doing *Spartacus*, we went to James Mason and we had the same problem with Mason that we had with Kirk Douglas, that he was going to do a play in New York and he wasn't available. So we had to abandon the idea of James Mason. Stanley was working with Laurence Olivier on *Spartacus* and so we had lunch with Larry, Sir Larry, and he agreed to do it, he agreed to do it, and he said he just had to tell his agent – it was MCA at the time – and they were also our agents. Stanley and I had MCA as our agents. And that afternoon he told Stanley, sorry, he's not able to do it. Well, I'm sure MCA talked him out of it, that Sir Laurence Olivier can't walk into a project like this with these two kids and, god knows what they're going to do, you know, you are Sir Laurence, you can't be running the risk of telling the story of a paedophile. So we didn't have Mason and we didn't have Olivier. And I thought, maybe we can get David Niven. He jumped at the chance to do it. Stanley was kind of hesitant about that, but I talked him into it. And then we lost David Niven because he was doing a television show for Four Star Television and they had sponsors and so William Morris, the agency, told us that they had to withdraw David because if he did *Lolita* then the sponsors would cancel his television show. So we didn't have anybody. And then out of the blue James Mason calls us back, the same thing that happened with Kirk Douglas, his play fell through and he's available and he wanted to know if we still wanted him. You know, at that point I said don't go anywhere, you know, I'm coming right over.

JF: Yeah.

JBH: And so we now had James Mason in *Lolita*, and I don't think he'd even read the screenplay. You know, it's just that everybody knew that the subject, they knew about *Paths of Glory* and *The Killing* and they knew that Stanley was doing *Spartacus* with Olivier and Laughton and Ustinov and Kirk. And, you know, we had this tremendous prestige going for us that we were able to get the actors to agree to do the screenplay. But I didn't have the money to do the film, so I thought maybe I could get, you know what presales are? You know, you can presell territories?

JF: Yeah.

JBH: You can sell it to distributors across to France, to Italy, to Germany, so I thought I would make a trip to Europe while Stanley was finishing up *Spartacus* and raise some money by preselling the distribution rights to this picture. Because I could at least say that James Mason is committed to doing it.

JF: Yeah.

JBH: So my first stop was in New York and I was having lunch with a friend of mine, his name was Kenneth Hyman, and Ken Hyman and I were schoolmates, just like I was with David Wolper. In fact, in our class in high school Steve Ross, who eventually became head of Time Warner, and David Wolper, who became a huge television producer, you know, having done all these biographies and then he did *Roots*, and *Thornbirds*, he became a giant. And all of us were in the same class in high school. And Kenny Hyman's father was also in the film business and he said that his dad had this company and they were looking to do some feature films. So he said why don't we go back and talk to my dad. So I made the deal in ten minutes, you know, it was a miracle; we went from just having a lunch to going back to his father's office. And his father said what are you doing and so I told him about *Lolita* and he said ok let's be partners; we'll put up the money, how much do you need? So Stanley and I thought we could find some cheap place in the world to do it for a million dollars. So I said I need a million dollars and Elliott said fine. We'll be fifty-fifty partners, find the girl to do the

part and we'll put her under contract and share the contract and I'll see you later. And that was it. It took ten minutes to get the commitment. And so I went to Europe now, not looking for money but looking for a place to do the picture. It was a great trip because I had no pressure on me at this point.

JF: Yeah.

JBH: As time went by though, when Seven Arts realised that we had James Mason and they said why can't we do this as an Eady Plan picture, do it in London. We can take advantage of the Eady Plan and you get two exemptions. You can exempt the director and you can exempt Shelly Winters. And we got Peter Sellers after we got James Mason, so we would easily qualify for an Eady Levy picture. But the budget went from a million to like a million and three quarters. You know, as time goes along you're talked into spending more money, you know, you can't do it for a million in England so forth and so on, because of the union. So that answers your question of how it came to be an Eady Plan picture.

JF: When would the Eady Levy money have been paid? After the picture had been released?

JBH: I think it comes back after, you know, based on the gross of the picture, or something like that.

JF: Yes, so obviously with *Lolita*, Kubrick said later that if he'd known about the censorship issues, he perhaps wouldn't have filmed the novel. I mean, what are your views about the censorship issues on that particular picture?

JF: Well the company that put up the money, it eventually became Seven Arts. You know, it was Associated Artists originally, then it became Seven Arts, and of all things, being a small world, they took on Ray Stark, the very person that made the Kirk Douglas deal.

JF: Oh right, yes.

JBH: He was now the top executive for Seven Arts, but anyway, Seven Arts decided that they wanted to get some protection on the censorship, so they hired a man named Martin Quigley, you know, who was the founder of the code, you know of the censor code, the MPAA. And Quigley had written the code, so we figured if we could get him on our film as a technical adviser, he could keep us out of trouble, he could guide us, you know. Because you had to get a code seal in those days, there was no classification. That's alleviated since now you have a G and a PG13 and an R and all of that. But in those days, you had to get a code seal, or you're out of business. So that was an absolute must, so that's why they hired Quigley and he negotiated with Geoffrey Sherlock, who was the man in charge of the code for the MPAA after the picture was finished. And there were only minor cuts necessary. If you're familiar with the picture, the only thing that they really had us shorten is when they are in the hotel room when they wake up in the morning.

JF: Ah yes, is this when they're on the cot.

JBH: James Mason is on the cot and she says, did you ever play a game when you were young, he says what game was that, and she whispers in his ear. And so she moves down to the middle of the bed and starts to bend over, which looks like she's about to perform oral sex. That's how they interpreted it and so they asked us to shorten that and to not have her lean down toward his midsection. But that was a minor cut, you know, it's all implied in the dialogue anyway, this is where we play the game.

JF: Yeah, the dialogue's fantastic.

JBH: Yeah, we had no problem, if that got us a code seal. You know, I wasn't even in on the negotiation. That was the whole beauty of it is that we had the original writer of the code negotiating with the MPAA. It was like a payoff. But our troubles were not over yet. There was a thing called the Legion of Decency in those days. You know, called the Catholic Legion of Decency. It was supervised by an archbishop, no, by

a...was he an archbishop? I don't know, but his name was Senor [Inaudible] Liddle. And he condemned the movie, along with *La Dolce Vita*, the two pictures were condemned, and so all the Catholic churches told their congregations not to go attend this movie. We had to get it by the Legion of Decency, which we eventually did. It took six months, but we eventually negotiated some edits on the film. And I must say that they were not outrageously strict. They were understanding and, you know, but they stood firm on certain things. They screened it for the nuns and people and a lot of the reviews coming back were complementary of the film and so it softened them up a little bit on the censorship issue. We had to change certain things and we had to agree that when the picture was distributed that we would have a restriction on age and that nobody could attend the picture that was under the age of seventeen. So we made that deal and got by the censorship. We had to make some edits in the film but they weren't really major. Do you remember the scene when Humbert is in bed with Charlotte?

JF: Is this with the photograph?

JBH: The picture that Humbert is looking at whilst in bed with Charlotte. Well we had to shorten, I don't know how many looks he had at the picture, but we had to trim that down to maybe two looks. I mean, I tried to argue with them.

[Laughter]

JBH: I was embarrassed to try to sell the point to them that he wasn't using it as an aphrodisiac, but you know we played it that way. But I was saying that he was using, you know, he just missed her.

[Laughter]

JBH: But they didn't buy it and that people would interpret it as using her to be sexually stimulated, because he wouldn't ordinarily be stimulated by his wife.

[Laughter]

JBH: So we made that and there was a, there was a picture over, you know, the ashes, we had to cut that out. The ashes of her former husband.

JF: Oh yeah.

JBH: Because there was a religious picture or something on top of it. We had to put a negative, a blur, to blur out this religious picture, whatever it was. And then we had to put that in the ads when MGM distributed the movie. I mean, it was ridiculous to say that anybody under seventeen, which meant that Sue [Lyon] couldn't go to the premiere of the picture. I mean it was absurd. She did the picture but she wasn't allowed to see it.

JF: Yeah.

JBH: But anyway, we got it through and that's the whole story of the censorship.

JF: I'm conscious of time, because I don't want to keep you too long and I'm just interested in how, obviously after *Lolita* Kubrick is wanting to make this nuclear holocaust film, *Dr. Strangelove*. So you were initially involved in the preproduction of that, is that right?

JBH: Yeah, yeah, we acquired the film rights to a book called *Red Alert* by an English writer named Peter George and Stanley was absolutely convinced that there was going to be a thermo-nuclear confrontation. He even opened a bank account in Australia, figuring that he was going. You know, this is the nexus of how we came upon doing a picture about it. And I did a picture about it too, a serious version of a thermo-nuclear dilemma. But anyway, so we thought that this would make a terrific suspense movie and so we set about doing the script, you know, he did a script with Peter George and then Stanley and I got started on working on a script together in his New York apartment and there were times when it got late and it got a little silly. And we thought about what it would be like in the War Room if everybody got hungry, and you know send out to the deli.

[Laughter]

JBH: And you know, the Jewish waiter comes in with the apron on and someone wants the corn beef on rye. And you know, Stanley and I, we never ever smoked grass or ever got in to drugs or anything, so the point was, we were almost behaving like we were on, smoking grass or something. We found it so funny, we became so hysterical about it. And, you know, we figured we can't get off a winner. The book is a winner as a serious dramatic piece, we better stick with it, because to sustain a comedy for two hours, you know, is not our thing. We'd never done that. We did *Lolita* as a comedy really, but you know it was pretty much, you could take it either way, you know, we kept the humour in it and that's why Peter Sellers did it. Not like the remake where they had [Frank] Langella. I mean, there wasn't a laugh in that whole movie. I think that's where they went wrong. You know, I mean they had some pretty good talent in that movie and yet they took it too seriously. You have to approach it as humour.

JF: I completely agree.

JBH: We of course got rid of any prior attitude to paedophilia with Humbert Humbert. We just made *Lolita* the first person that captured his fancy. But anyway, we decided we would play it straight. And we finished – and when I say we I was sort of more of a consultant, a helper on the script, I wouldn't get any credit for writing it. But I kind of engineered it for them to stick with the seriousness of it. We had sold our rights of *Lolita* to Seven Arts and when the deal came along we owed them a second picture and I figured this would be perfect for the second picture to be 'Edge of Fear', 'Edge of Doom', whatever we called it. And we took a big double page trade ad saying, you know, Harris-Kubrick's next movie is this. And I went to Eliot Hyman, who was head of Seven Arts, and he didn't want to do the picture as he didn't like the idea. I talked him into it, I begged him to do it, I said it's going to be terrific, there's never been anything like this. And I talked him in to doing it, and it's at this point – I know one of your questions is – it was at this point that I had been developing this desire to direct film. I mean, you can't blame me, hanging around Kubrick for seven years and three

movies, and you just get so inspired to want to direct. And when you see a master, when you see somebody who is that good, it looks easy, you know, I mean I don't know if you're in to sports or anything, but you know the best athletes always make it look easy, and the same play by the average person makes it look spectacular. But the real superstars, they make it look easy. And, you know, I didn't realise how directing was until I tried it. But I had built up this terrific desire, based upon Stanley's encouragement, first of all – not that he wanted to get rid of me, because he always loved the idea of sharing and I'd sit next to him in the editing room and he always wanted me around for consultation and for support and he had no feeling of resentment or, you know, he never, he invited criticism, he invited me to express my opinions about things. He never felt he had to preserve or play a game with being totally confident that he didn't need any help.

JF: Would you perhaps describe the relationship as being collaborative, as very collaborative?

JBH: It was completely, particularly on *Lolita*, because on *Lolita* you know, my brother wrote the love theme.

JF: Oh right.

JBH: Stanley loved it. My brother wrote it, I brought in Nelson Riddle to do the music, I talked, I told Stanley that it would play much better if we did it in flashback form, because you don't want to end the picture on a comedic scene, you want to end it, end the picture on a feeling of sorry for Humbert, feeling all his distress. And so, you know, we played the killing of Clare Quilty in flashback. So I made a lot of contributions and even wrote some of the scenes – with the hula-hoop, watching the horror movies, things like that. And Stanley loved this, I mean even on the post-production stuff he would let me do the ADR stuff with Shelley Winters and so forth. Probably because she was a pain in the neck.

[Laughter]



JBH: But anyway, so I went to Eliot and talked him into it and at this point I felt I had now arranged the financing, the script was solid, the deal was made, and I could feel free, you know, and no way in letting Stanley down, because now all he had to do was make the movie and he's got it financed. You ask a question here about producing. Stanley can do anything. I mean Stanley when he puts his mind to it can do anything. He watched me throughout the picture, consulting with me on anything to do with producing. He could just take over and, which he did. He had no trouble. He used his brother-in-law, Jan, to be the executive producer to take care of a lot of details on things that Stanley wouldn't bother with. But Stanley had a complete understanding of the business aspects of it and probably many times he questioned me on certain things, which ruminated, certain things I wouldn't have thought of had Stanley not brought it up. So we did the same thing, we started playing poker by just reading the books on how to play and the next thing you know we're playing in \$500 table stakes and then we got in to the stock market. We used to go to the stock market, to the broker's office and watch the ticker, buy trade stocks. In California we are three hours behind New York, so you had to get there at 6.30. So the point I'm making is that anything Stanley put his mind to do, he'd become an expert at it. You know, when he decided to do *Red Alert*, he read, you know, he gave me the books to read, *On Thermo-Nuclear War* by Herman Kahn. Herman Kahn was a think tank specialist. You know the name Herman Kahn?

JF: Yeah, yeah.

JBH: He was in phone calls with Herman Kahn. I mean you're talking to the guy who wrote the book and that's how it was with Arthur Clarke. You know, it doesn't matter if he's playing poker with the best poker players. He truly, truly was, I hate to use the word genius, I mean I really hate it because I'd rather say extremely talented, one of a kind, you know that type of thing, but he truly, when he put his mind to something, he became an expert at it. I mean it's amazing. And so, when you ask about producing, that was like a piece of cake, nothing to it. Ok, so now, I'm free to go back to California and open an office there, and I'm looking for material to do as a director. Then after a

couple of weeks I get a call from Stanley and he says do you know who Terry Southern is and I said no, and he said he wrote books like *The Magic Christian*, stuff like that. He's a really funny guy, really terrific, and we're starting to turn the script into a satire comedy and I said *what!* I said, Stanley you got a good thing going. Eliot Hyman, I had to use every bit of persuasion to get him to do the picture, you're going to turn it into a comedy, you're going to blow the deal with them for sure. He said no, I think you can make the point a lot better in a satire or comedy than in a straight dramatic piece. I said oh my god, and when I hung up the phone, you know, he started to read me names like Jack D. Ripper and Merkin Muffley, I said to myself, gee he's going nuts, I mean, he's flipped out.

[Laughter]

JBH: And when I hung up the phone I said, it just goes to show you, I leave him alone for ten minutes, and he's going to blow his whole career. And it turned out that *Dr. Strangelove* is my favourite Kubrick film, you know, it just makes the point of how smart and how clever and talented he was.

JF: And it's a film that still resonates today, that film, doesn't it?

JBH: Absolutely.

JF: The fact that it's so funny, but at the same time that's the scary thing about it.

JBH: Yeah, I mean I've seen it seven, eight times, ten, I don't know how many times I've seen it and to me it's like always seeing it for the first time. You know, I still laugh at all the gags and all the funny stuff. And people like George C. Scott, was incredible, you know, the way he played that part. The only thing was that Peter was going to do the Slim Pickens part, but it became too much. He was going to play the president, he was going to play *Strangelove* and he's going to play *Mandrake*. And then he was going to play *Cowboy*. But when it came to doing it, just like in *Lolita*, he was going to play the school psychiatrist in drag, he came down in makeup and in shoes, he looked like

Miss Marple and he just said the same thing he said about *Strangelove*, he said that's too much. It's a little too broad, you know, *Lolita* is such a good satire really. The only time we rallied against that was, I couldn't resist it, was when bringing the cot up, when *Lolita* is sleeping in bed, and they bring up the cot and they can't open the cot. He just left me to it, you know, Stanley just went along with it. Anyway, the point I'm making is that Stanley turned it into a masterpiece, an absolute masterpiece.

JF: Yes, yes. Well thank you very much for taking the time out to do this interview.

JBH: Thank you. If you're ever in Los Angeles, drop by.

## Appendix II:

### Transcript of Interview with Jan Harlan

Date: 27 January 2016, St. Albans, UK.

Participants: Jan Harlan (JH) James Fenwick (JF)

JF: Thank you for agreeing to do this.

JBH: You're welcome.

JF: I just wanted to start with a question, if you just explain or tell me about your first official role on a Kubrick production.

JH: It originally was research for *Napoleon*. I did that in Zurich and in Germany gathering picture material from the period, and other people did the same. And then, since I knew him [Kubrick] already quite well, through other things like music and stuff like this, he asked me in 1969 whether I would be interested in joining him for a year to work on *Napoleon* in Romania; Romania because he had a principle deal to use the Romanian cavalry for the first Italian campaign and the Russian campaign. At that time only Eastern Bloc countries still had cavalry and you need a cavalry not horses and riders, they look ridiculous, they are just not, just not believable. You also didn't have computer graphics, you had to film everything for real. I'm talking 1970. That was the plan. Anyway, so, the company I worked for in Zurich – which was organising and business planning, that's what I did before, in New York and Zurich, Frankfurt and Vienna – they said oh absolutely, do this, it can only be beneficial, blah blah blah. Off you go for a year. And Romania also at that time, they spoke more likely German and French rather than English. So, and Romania was also good cause it had such a varied landscape, very mountainous in the north, and really it's a big country with different climate zones. So it suited him very well for the Italian campaign and for the Russian campaign. So, alright, I came to England, I met all the people, people like Ray Lovejoy

and all the people who worked with him already. I got introduced to them, I rented a house, and I bought a Landrover, getting already basically six months later to go to Romania. And then MGM pulled the plug. They got scared. They didn't believe the budget was going to be that believable. They probably didn't like the script. I don't blame them, because he didn't like it either particularly. He would never have made that script that he delivered. But he wanted to do something that would fit in three hours. I don't think it would have. I personally think he would have made a two-part film, lasting four to five hours. But anyway, whatever MGM thought, the official line was that Dino De Laurentiis had made a plan to do *Waterloo*, with Rod Steiger in the role of Napoleon, it was a Soviet, American, French co-production, and it was too risky for them to do a Kubrick related theme a bit later. And so they pulled the plug. So I had a rented house in Elstree. Kubrick was depressed for two weeks because he had invested two years of his life and I was ready to go back to wherever, New York, Zurich. I had a baby. I was already married. And then he said well, we get on well together, you like it here. Maria loved England, totally besotted with England, and I liked him and we got along extremely well and so we thought, ok, we'll have a go. One of the first things I did was organise the rights for *Traumnovelle* by Arthur Schnitzler, 1970, he was totally besotted with *Traumnovelle*. I think it was a difficult, difficult task, but it became our very first deal with Warner Bros., signed and sealed and ready to go. Approved, budgeted, scheduled, everything. Not casted. And then Stanley got cold feet. Just too bloody difficult frankly. And he went to Warner Bros. and said, look, let's postpone this, I don't know how to do this yet. I'll think about it.

JF: Sorry, but do you think that was Kubrick with his producing head on?

JH: No, it was the artist. The producer didn't come into it. He was somehow always given, because he came to Warner Bros. with something and he had just made *2001* for MGM, Warner Bros. were delighted to have this guy on their books. So he was very cross with MGM because they had pulled out of *Napoleon*. No, no, that was from a Warner Bros. point of view a production issue. For Stanley, he wanted to do Schnitzler, he was absolutely crazy about this novel. And he was fascinated by the fact that Sigmund Freud called Schnitzler his alter ego and all these kind of things. And I studied

the Dream Diary, and the archive and so he thought about this for weeks and weeks, and weeks. But he wasn't happy with the script he was at that point writing by himself. So then he approached Warner Bros., at the same time Warner Bros. had an interest in this book *A Clockwork Orange*, which he also had read. And Warner Bros. jumped on this and said, fine, don't do *Traumnovelle*, don't do that, very happy for you to do *A Clockwork Orange*, and that was my first practical experience. *A Clockwork Orange* was easy, because it was a scissor job. It's a book written in the first person, so basically today you'd call it cut and paste. So, 'there is me Alex and my three droogs', bang, you've got the line. So it was much, much easier to transfer into a film script. It was also a short book. And in substance, he was totally loyal to the book, in substance. Not in form here and there, but that doesn't matter. Well it was my first experience and I liked it very much, I liked to work with him, I liked this degree of self-criticism. Also this mixture of being careful and reckless. I admire that very much. He was also a funny man, very great sense of humour and he was a political beast, which also suited me. He was interested in what was going on in the world, and then very, very soon, I mean he was very interested in making a film about the Holocaust, always, was not at all interested in a documentary, I mean not at all, that was not what he did. He wanted to have a drama, a Shakespearean drama like *Electra* or something like that. And he tried an idea to develop a film, an ordinary day at UFA Studios during the Nazi period under the umbrella of Joseph Goebbels, but I worked with good people, but we couldn't get the story together. So he gave up and he then did *Barry Lyndon*. Parallel to that or immediately afterwards, there was always focus again on the Holocaust, so one of the things that came up, and Maria was instrumental in this, is Isaac Bashevis Singer. Do you know him?

JF: Yes.

JH: Incredible man. He died a long time ago, but he got the Nobel Prize for Literature. I'm talking about the 1970s. And then we said, this is a guy who must know, I mean he was surrounded by refugees and he went public saying everyone has a story to tell, every person has a story to tell. So Stanley thought it was a good idea, so I made an appointment through the publishers, very official, went to New York, saw Mr. Singer,

terrific guy, and stated my case and Singer, incredibly polite, said, ‘I loved *Barry Lyndon*, *Dr. Strangelove*’, it was just after *Barry Lyndon*. I think it was 1976. So I stated my case and he said he was very interested, very flattered that Mr. Kubrick would want to hire me and write a film script, blah, blah, blah but there’s a huge problem. And I said, what’s that? I don’t know the first thing about it. And Stanley understood that message and dropped the whole thing for twenty years, until he came to do Begley’s book called *Wartime Lies*. And there was an element of autobiography, and so Stanley felt encouraged again because this man did know what it was all about. He couldn’t say he didn’t know the first thing about it, because he wrote about himself. He was the little boy, do you know the book?

JF: I do. I have done quite a bit of research about this.

JH: So he was the little boy. And so I met Louis Begley, wonderful man, he still is alive, he became a lawyer. As a child he managed to get through the net of Nazi occupation, went to America, was educated there, became a lawyer, very successful, has a wonderful house on Fifth Avenue, and so anyway. I met him, I met him twice. Then Stanley was very glad that he could finally fulfil this, we are now talking much later. 1992 and 1993, yeah. A real big jump forward. And I worked for almost a year on it. It was just after 1989, the Berlin Wall had fallen, the whole thing collapsed, the Eastern European countries could be accessed and I was there on the day when the Czech Republic and Slovakia split. I was already as far gone as having a deal with the city of Bruno to put Nazi flags down on a weekend, close the city centre for a weekend to copy Warsaw, because Warsaw had been destroyed completely. To have trams from the tram museum there. We were that far gone, we had spent a lot of money. Then it was Terry Semel, the head of Warner Bros. who called Stanley and said, ‘do you realise, Steven is making a film called *Schindler’s List* in Krakow?’ Sort of related topic not quite sure but definitely.

JF: Was he making it roughly the time you were out there?

JH: Maybe a little bit later, but more or less that time frame. The time frame for Steven was so fast, and we are so slow. He would have been out before us, that was the key. Never mind details, the key thing is we would have followed *Schindler's List*. Terry Semel didn't know anything about *Schindler's List*, whether it was good or not, it was a Steven Spielberg film. I mean it will get attention. You don't want to follow that. Let's postpone it. What Warner Bros. was much more interested in anyway was that Stanley should do *A.I. Artificial Intelligence* because we had optioned the book by Brian Aldiss called *Super Toys Last All Summer Long*. Stanley loved the book and when I say loved the book he always loved what he did. He wouldn't touch a story unless he had sort of a crush on it. That was a prerequisite almost. He was in love with *A Clockwork Orange*, or *Traumnovelle*, or whatever else. It was never, 'ah it's not too bad, let's do it'. Forget that, it wasn't Kubrick. But anyway, he loved that Brian Aldiss also worked with him, it was a short story that had to be lengthened. Stanley came up with the idea to do *Pinocchio*. This whole *Pinocchio* came from Stanley. Anyway, and then finally he didn't do it because he thought actually for this film Steven would be the better director. I was very disappointed because I was looking forward to it. I remember Steven came within forty-eight hours from Los Angeles to the kitchen here in St. Albans. They sit at this big table, these two guys – remember we already had 600 drawings made by Chris Baker on the concept of *A.I.* and Steven was very excited, but of course, you know, he also has plans. So it wasn't that simple, he couldn't say 'oh, well I'll do it'. But then, so it didn't happen. Stanley had of course convinced himself that Steven would be the better man and because it needed a lot of special effects, a lot of crew, and a lot of technical stuff and he finally decided to do *Eyes Wide Shut*. Warners were disappointed, but let's put it on ice and do *Eyes Wide Shut*. And that's when the producing part comes in, when he has the freedom basically to do what he wants, but the producer part is not really that important, it's his artistry and the seriousness he brought to every project that makes his films last forever. Go back to *The Killing* and *Paths of Glory*, *Lolita*, they're all there. Nothing disappears. That's the work of an artist. That's not the mark of a producer. So let's go back: so the irony is that after his death, well it's not irony, it's very nice. Steven Spielberg, who loved Kubrick, they loved each other, because they were so different.



JF: Yes, in terms of filmmaking styles and themes.

JH: Yes. I mean, Stanley loved *E.T.* and all these films, but he would never have been able to do that, it was just gorgeous.

JF: I do like the idea of those two collaborating, it's kind of the tension between the different kind of filmmaking styles.

JH: Totally different. And Steven, I know that Steven invited, that when Steven had heard Stanley had died, next day he invited all his close friends to his house and screened *Paths of Glory*. I mean it was that kind of a relationship. Anyway, so then Steven made *A.I.* after Stanley's death, very quickly after. He was very faithful to Stanley's concept, but did exactly what Stanley wanted, but lightening it up a bit, without pulling the dark side of it completely because humanity has gone. And the only thing that remains of us, our own creators computers, robots that have developed to such an extent there's a fairytale element here that they were able to sustain themselves. And the film doesn't say for how many centuries after humanity lived after the little boy gets trapped under the Ferris wheel. We don't know. 500 years? 1000 years? We don't know because then it cuts 2000 years further. And that was what was in Stanley's script. And the key part of *A.I.*, which is something that Steven Spielberg completely stuck with and honoured Stanley by not explaining anything. And that is, at the end, all the robots discovering the little boy, all they do, is they all at the same time get the information telling us there is no hierarchy and that's why they exist.

JF: That's a very Kubrick idea.

JH: Yes, very much so. There's no hierarchy. That was that.

JF: If we just go back then to when you, the first time you got a credit as an executive producer that was *Barry Lyndon*.

JH: I always did the same.

JF: So if you could describe that then for the first time on *Barry Lyndon*.

JH: Getting permissions. Get permissions to shoot in Potsdam, second unit permissions, talk to, that's what you do, you get permissions, you make deals, I suggested music, but that was not really my role that was fun. I just know a lot of music so I suggested it. He decided it. I had nothing to do with what you see on the screen. Only to do with what I was supposed to get, that he wanted. I was a member of the crew. Ok, I had signature power, but I was a member of the crew, and my job was to make deals, to negotiate, to get permissions, to hire people, to do what was wanted.

JF: To make sure that the film got made?

JH: I wouldn't go that far. I wouldn't take that much of a credit. He made sure the film got made. He negotiated with Warner Bros. initially. Once that was done, then it's automatic, the money gets transferred weekly, you don't have to worry about that. What the accounts department does is produce a progress report, together with first assistant, to report what we have done. That's an automatic process, that's true in every film. Do you know about progress reports?

JF: I've seen many, yes.

JH: It's not that complicated. You say what you have done this week and therefore conclude what still has to be done in order to complete. The key part of the progress report is not just to say what you have done, where the progress is, but what have you *not* done, so that the studio knows that, say, last week it was still to complete eighty-one days, and this week it is still to complete eighty-one days. So, you know, you lost a day. So that's the idea, and so that the studio has a little bit of an idea, not that they can do much about it because half a film is no good at all, so you get the producer. In case of Kubrick, there are severe penalties if it goes seriously over budget, but even that doesn't help you. So if the film isn't finished, you have to finish it, otherwise you have nothing. So that's what I did.

JF: So Kubrick was in charge of the creative?

JH: He was in charge of what he put on the screen. It was his idea and you have constantly, you are constantly in touch with him for each scene and he, he talks to the art director and says really we need this. Only if someone can express what you need, then I come in, ok? I will see how we can get it. But it is not an inartistic job that I had. Suggesting music is not really, I mean that was easy, but he decides. I had a wonderful job, no responsibility at all. It was really his film, totally. He also edited the film. Of course he had technical people who did it, but he decided on the cut. Just think of the huge change he made in *2001* and he decided to kick out Alex North's scores and take Johann Strauss. I mean, I think everyone around him thought he had really lost it, seriously, but he was right. I suggested the Strauss to him, but I don't take any credit for it. He just called me and said I really need something big, that comes to an end, and I said, oh ok, big. I had a stack of LPs, you know, Bruckstein, Mahler, Wagner, and aye aye aye. And the needle dropped, so, and he already liked the title, *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*. I didn't realise how much that fitted, in context, I didn't know the film at all. And then, yeah, he got the rights and wonderful. And then when I needed, I made this documentary on Kubrick, have you seen that?

JF: *Life in Pictures*? Yes.

JH: Well I use that music of course. I also needed the rights, it was not yet in public domain. So I stated my case, said I have no budget, I need this to be very cheap or I can't use it. And I'm making a film about Kubrick and of course it should have this music. And they said to me, you made us so much money because Kubrick used that music afterwards for commercials and stuff, you can have it for £1. So going back to *Barry Lyndon*, that's what I did. We went to Ireland, we shot in Wiltshire, we had an office in Salisbury, before that in Waterford, and then in Bray, Bray studios in Dublin, it was a big long film. It was very successful in the Latin countries, it was a complete flop here and the United States, and this is what happened to him often. *Eyes Wide Shut* exactly the same. *Eyes Wide Shut* was really killed in America and in Northern Europe,

including the UK, and it was hugely successful in Portugal, Spain, France, Italy, and Japan.

JF: Do you think with *Barry Lyndon*, obviously things were changing in Hollywood: Spielberg had just done *Jaws*, then you get *Star Wars*, the kind of films that are being made are very different. Was Kubrick effected by that in terms of, did he think well, maybe I've got to change?

JH: No, he didn't, he couldn't. He couldn't change, he was himself. I mean, you know, Van Gogh never sold a painting, that didn't mean he didn't stop painting or painting more like people who were successful, he couldn't. The main thing was that *he* had to like what he did. For Kubrick, he was no good at doing, at filming to order. He had to like it. He loved *Barry Lyndon*, and of course *Jaws* came. *Jaws* wiped us out in business terms, except in Lisbon. Lisbon is the only town where we are beating *Jaws*. Maybe that tells you something about the Portuguese. But anyway, be that as it may, it was a very small market at the time, and I don't think the currency was even convertible, I mean it was just crazy, before the EU and everything – I think it was still a dictatorship in Lisbon at that time. But, so, that was *Barry Lyndon*. *Eyes Wide Shut* exactly the same, as I mentioned. *EWS* huge hit in Japan, we got an email from the Japan – I told this to students just last week – an email saying, not an email, what's it called – a fax! Saying, incredible what the film does here, fantastic: couples are leaving the cinema holding hands.

JF: Which is different to how people tried to criticise the film as being cold.

JH: The justified criticism is that it's bloody complicated if you don't pay attention. And you have to see the film twice. And if you don't like it the first time, why would you bother seeing it a second time? So, that's the problem. But it's not a problem in France, Italy and Spain. I mean, they aren't more intelligent than Britain, or people in Sweden, or Norway, or wherever, but they have a different kind of thing. I spoke to a journalist in Rome and explained this to him, and he said, oh it's quite clear, it has to do with Catholicism. I said why? What on earth does it have to do with Catholicism? We

deal with the topic of sex and lust early on, it's always on the table. You pretend it doesn't concern you and you make dirty jokes, that's the difference. I mean, it's oversimplified, no doubt, but it's interesting that he said it. What do I know? I know that it was a flop here, and a big hit in Italy, so there's no question about that. That's what it is. That's what I know. And it's also more coming up, the people who thought the film was stupid realise suddenly that actually it isn't.

JF: It's took a lot longer than, because that's the thing with Kubrick's films. For instance, *Barry Lyndon*, it takes several years for people to get them. But with *Eyes Wide Shut*, it seems to have taken a lot longer.

JH: I think *EWS* will be around in a hundred years. It is like, certain films, you know, if you ever want to know about the, say, the past, it's perfect to look at the old Bergman films, to get an insight into Swedish society like nothing else. Yeah, so Kubrick is great.

JF: So, going back to *Barry Lyndon*, how, in kind of a business sense it was made. So, for instance, Bernard Williams was on that film.

JH: Bernard Williams, yes, he died last year.

JF: Brian Cook.

JH: He's still alive.

JF: So how were they lined managed, and in terms of that business side?

JH: Oh, it was different jobs.

JF: But was there a hierarchy?

JH: It's not a case of a hierarchy. It's different jobs, not hierarchical. Bernie did similar stuff to me, but there was so much to do. I concentrated a lot on second unit and Bernie

did a lot in England and Ireland. Brian Cook is the first AD, he has to deal with today, now, right what happens in the next two hours. He has to get ready for the next day. He does the call sheets. Bernie has nothing to do with that. I have nothing to do with that. He does the call sheet with Stanley, what do we do tomorrow. That depends on the weather forecast. It depends on very down to earth things. And then you prepare the call sheet for the next day and you make sure that the right actors are called. So, it's a different job. It's not a question of hierarchy.

JF: But is there some sort of, like, a meeting that takes place to liaise with what's going to happen so that people know?

JH: Sure, you have to make sure that everybody who needs to know is there and is informed. That happens all the time, though not many formal meetings during the shooting. That happens parallel. As soon as there's a break you get together and you decide. The so-called production meetings happen before, before you start shooting. Too expensive, don't want to waste any time.

JF: So when the shoot is taking place it's a lot more frantic.

JH: Yeah, though, frantic is really what Stanley was fighting. The more you really shoot, I mean it has to be prepared, everybody is rushing around, but the moment you film, no noise, quiet, have all the time in the world. Very important.

JF: So time was very important.

JH: Sure. But time was of essence, yeah. In *Eyes Wide Shut*, I talked to another film accountant and we spent as much in a week as they did in a day. But we had so few people. Everybody has to do everything. I bought all the masks in Venice. I personally went to Venice and bought the masks, that's how we worked.

JF: So it's almost like a family?

JH: Well, yeah, you have to, if you shoot so long, you have to have a small crew, otherwise you go bust. Stanley rightly said that he trusted our tastes, trusted me to buy the masks, they look good. I also thought you could make telephone calls from wherever you are, and he was absolutely right. So, and today, it's even better. I mean it doesn't matter where I am, I can do my job. I am all the time in touch with the exhibition and Warner Bros. I have my laptop and my phone. They don't even know that I'm not at home or my office or in Denmark last week. They couldn't care less, it doesn't matter.

JH: So in terms of the budget, how was that compiled then? Would Kubrick himself sit and compile the budget for a film?

JF: No, the budget is a question of above and below the line as you know. So above the line is nothing, it depends on the deal you make with the above the line people, that's Stanley himself, and if you have Jack Nicholson – and that has no effect on the below the line budget. The below the line budget is made simply in cooperation with the studio, art department, how much does it cost, the rental of the stages, how long do you need the stages, to build, to shoot, to wrap. So you know how much a stage costs in rental, you know how many stages you need, you know how many extras, how many props, etc, and it's the accountant and the art department, every department has to give a sub-budget to say what they need, that's how the budget is made together with the schedule. The schedule, how many days, and then you have the cast, that's a separate item, but the cast is usually still below the line. And then you have the above the line if you have Tom and Nicole, that's an above the line cost.

JF: It was John Trehy, the accountant.

JH: Yes, John Trehy, brilliant guy. He's an accountant, yeah. He could tell you all about it. He did also the Harry Potter films. A very competent accountant. He's a pencil pusher, that's what he does.

JF: Thinking about *Barry Lyndon*, what were the main problems while filming that?

JH: Oh, big problems. We filmed in Ireland and we had the IRA who hated an English crew, potentially, and at one point we had to run. Whether it was justified or not, I don't know, but we stopped from one day to the other and moved to Wiltshire. That was a problem. Luckily we had finished. The other problem is that if you shoot in Ireland, or in Wiltshire, and you do exterior filming you are weather dependent, not only good or bad weather but have the same weather for the same scene, because once you start in bad weather you don't want the sun to shine. Or the other way around, because otherwise you can't edit, you see, it doesn't make any sense. Particularly if your exteriors were daylight, not daylight, clouds or not clouds, it makes a huge difference. So these are things, and you sometimes don't have weather cover. If you have a studio film, where you have inside and outside you always have weather cover. You know exactly if the weather screws you up, you go inside and carry on with another scene. And you have the actors for that other scene on standby. But this is normal planning. The other thing is that Stanley liked to shoot in script order, to the extent possible – he wasn't totally unreasonable. But if at all possible, he didn't like to shoot early late scenes in case he changed his mind on the script and then suddenly it doesn't fit. That also makes sense.

JF: And with *Barry Lyndon* was there a lot of improvisation?

JH: Sure. Always.

JF: For instance, with the final scene between Lord Bullingdon.

JH: Yes, we did that in Wiltshire.

JF: In the script it was just one line, but Kubrick turns it into this tense ten minute sequence.

JH: Yes, you have to make it believable. You have the nervousness of Lord Bullingdon, believable so that it becomes a drama. Not everyone likes the way the scene is shot.



Some people find it outright boring, it takes too long. But, you know, forget it, it catches the period. It catches the totally different character between Barry and Lord Bullingdon. Leon Vitalli was very good.

JF: And obviously another important part to *Barry Lyndon* is the camera and the collaboration with Ed Di Giulio.

JH: Ed Di Giulio was a head technician of a company called...

JF: ...Cinema Products.

JH: Yes, Cinema Products. Based in Los Angeles. Manufacturer of the Steadicam. So I was in touch with Ed Di Giulio for a long time. He almost became a friend, you know, I knew him, and when we were in Los Angeles we had dinner or lunch, nice guy. The key for him was to adapt a Mitchell BNC to take this ultra fast Zeiss lens, which Stanley needed in order to shoot by candlelight. That was his obsession almost. Now at that time, film speed was 100 ASA. If you pushed it in the bath one stop, it got grainy, it was really not good. The fastest lens was F2. And today a standard set is 1.2, or 1.4, absolutely normal. That time it was F2. There were good lenses in F2, but they were not as fast. But today, it's so much faster, or you use digital. I mean, it's so much easier and cheaper to make a film. To make a good film is as difficult as it always was, but that has nothing to do with the equipment. The equipment only has to do with costs, whether you could do certain things. Stanley had to, wanted to get this atmosphere of the period onto the screen, with costumes, with lighting, if you look at the paintings you always see the tables on the other window, and Dutch paintings, Rembrandt, and also English painters. So we found this lens. And Ed Di Giulio adapted the BNC and it worked, it was an incredible pain in the neck to use it, totally useless now, nobody would use it because if you do this [moves], you're out of focus.

JF: So did that have an effect on the framing?

JH: Sure. But on the other hand it looked good.

JF: Did it then become a close collaboration with Ed Di Giulio. Didn't he do something on *A Clockwork Orange*?

JH: No, that was Joe Dunton. Joe Dunton was our technical guy. And at that time you used blimped cameras, you didn't, I mean you could have had the big studio cameras, but Stanley didn't like that. And if you wanted real sound you had to blimp it. Ed Di Giulio only came in for *Barry Lyndon*. And then of course the Steadicam on *The Shining*. We had the inventor, Garrett Brown, we had him operate it. He was the operator on *The Shining*. *Eyes Wide Shut* we had Steadicam as well, but everyone had this by now.

JF: So obviously, Kubrick was an artist that would push the boundaries of cinema, but with, but did he ever have kind of, like a practical sense of 'this is not practical I need to restrain myself', rein in his ideas? I've thought it, therefore I'll film it.

JH: Oh no, he was not unreasonable. He was pushy enough and he knew it, but he made compromises. Absolutely comprise when stuff got too expensive, he dropped it. Like the other way around, he used the Schubert trio as music, it was out of time. He knew that, it was thirty years too late, he should have used Haydn or Mozart, but he said that this is perfect music, emotionally perfect music, I just adore it. He adored the Schubert trio, so he used it and never mind, who cares. The composition was public domain, cost nothing. We recorded it ourselves in a church so that we didn't waste money if we didn't have too. What was expensive was the long, complicated stuff with these bloody candles.

JF: With *The Shining* who is The Producers Circle?

JH: They had rights to the book. We don't know these people. They had rights to the book and they sold it to Warner Bros. with the condition they get credited. We don't know who they are, I've no idea. We don't know the company, where they are, don't know the people. We had this also in *A Clockwork Orange*. There is, I think it's

Litvinoff. They are people who are dealers, developers, they own the book, at the time, or an option in it. And so Warner Bros. got it and Warner Bros. bought it, and Anthony Burgess was very cross at first, because I think he got \$25,000 for the book, while Raab and Litvinoff got \$200,000 for the book. And he felt a bit sad about this. Well, he didn't have to sell it, nothing to do with Kubrick. For Kubrick, the book was simply provided by Warner Bros. and as part of the budget of the film of course. And WB had the rights now and only bought the rights because Stanley said I'm going to do it, otherwise they wouldn't have bothered.

JF: So, with Warner Bros Kubrick has this relationship from 1970.

JH: Yes, from *Traumnovelle*, that's the first.

JF: Through to *Eyes Wide Shut*. A long time.

JH: Yes, didn't go with anybody else.

JF: That relationship, then, it was quite obvious that it was a perfect relationship.

JH: Yes, perfect.

JF: But what was it then, what did they view Kubrick as in a business sense? Was it initially thought?

JH: Look, *A Clockwork Orange* made a fortune, it cost peanuts to make. It was, I think, \$2 million, so they made a fortune, but in addition to that they had a man who had great prestige from films he made for other people. *Dr. Strangelove*, *2001*, *Lolita*, I mean, Warner Bros. had great benefits, not financially, but from the prestige of having this man on their books. And they didn't want to lose him, ever again. So, now he did *Barry Lyndon*, which was not a financial success. Well, so, let's hope for the next one. Then came *The Shining*, financially dubious, but it's ok, it was a big hit, and it's now an absolute classic.

JF: It's considered one of the greatest horror films ever made.

JH: I think it gets more credit than it deserves. And then *Full Metal Jacket* again was a big financial hit. Cost very little money. Was shot in East London. But again, talking about compromise, they're all too old, Stanley knew that. The marine recruits should be nineteen or twenty. We tried, we had 2000 casting in tapes, and it was just pathetic. We gave up, and went up to twenty-six and twenty-seven, but good actors. And somehow the audience, nobody complained even though it was totally incorrect casting. Because it doesn't matter. Because it wasn't about that. *Full Metal Jacket* is the abuse of young men. And then, of course, *Eyes Wide Shut*.

JF: Would you describe Kubrick as a collaborator? Because with *2001*, how he facilitated an environment to allow other people to experiment as well.

JH: Sure. Particularly with the actors. Once the main take was in the can, let's see what else we can do. That's why he did many takes. Film is cheap in comparison to the overall budget. In *Eyes Wide Shut*, there were just seven people there: Tom and Nicole, a minimum crew, let's have fun. He hated it when there were so many people there. I remember a line of his: if you have more than forty people to wash up after lunch, you are making a mistake.

[Laughter]

JF: So obviously between films, Kubrick developed many projects. For instance, in the Archive there is Thomas Pynchon's *The Crying Lot of 49*.

JH: There are many projects. He prepared actively *A.I.* as you know, *Napoleon*, the Holocaust film as you know, *Eric Brighteyes* – that is Sir Rydl Hagaard. It was a very famous book by him. We gave up. I remember I shortened the novel by taking the whole Italian thing and inventing stuff. But it would have meant going on location to very cold areas if north Scotland wasn't good enough. So probably would have been

Iceland or Northern Finland and he didn't really fancy the idea. But it's a saga, beautiful book in the year 1000. Tremendous opera, huge development, fantastic story, but he just didn't like to travel. Travelling was a big, big problem for him. He hated it.

JF: Empyrean Films, that was a company that Kubrick formed and supervised by Tony Frewin?

JH: Yes, sure, book readers.

JF: So he was just constantly searching for the next project?

JH: All the topics I told you, he wanted to do. I mean, at one point I think he was dreaming of doing maybe a musical even. This is not all really realistic. Realistic was *Napoleon*, and the Holocaust film, *A.I.*, which he gave to Steven, and *Eric Brighteyes* for a short time, absolutely. And what else? He hired the costume designer and the set dresser from *Heimat* for *Aryan Papers*. He loved *Heimat*, totally taken by that.

JF: Did Kubrick have to pitch an idea to Warner Bros?

JH: He'd say to them, look I'm going to film this, are you interested. And they'd say yes, always. Sure, you want to make this film, fine. Ok, I mean, let us see what it is, what's the budget, who is going to be in it. Of course they're not saying do whatever you want, no way, but once they made a deal with him, they would never interfere. There was no point. I mean, what are you going to do? You hire a great painter, you don't tell them what colours to use.

JF: Thank you very much for your time today, Jan.

JH: Thank you.

# Appendix III: Statement of Profit and Loss, Minotaur Productions Inc. (*Killer's Kiss*), 24 August 1953 – 30 July 1960

Income from sale of <i>Killer's Kiss</i> to United Artists	\$75,000
Less cost of production	\$89,188.64
<b>Gross loss on sale</b>	<b>\$14,188.64</b>
<b>Less other expenses for period:</b>	
<i>Commission of Sale of Picture</i>	\$3,000
<i>Office rent</i>	\$150
<i>Interest and bank charges</i>	\$567
<i>Stationary and postage</i>	\$16.09
<i>Christmas expense</i>	\$55
<i>Misc</i>	\$21.81
<i>Telephone/graph</i>	\$33.77
<i>Professional fees</i>	\$500
<i>Officer's salary (S Kubrick)</i>	\$700
<i>Other taxes N.Y.S Franchise</i>	\$181.27
	<b>\$5,224.94</b>
<b>Gross Receipts:</b>	
<i>Tax</i>	\$187.50
<i>Occupancy Tax at \$6.70</i>	\$375.47
<i>Corporation Organisation Expense</i>	\$88.14
	<b>\$651.11</b>
<b>Net loss on corporation operation</b>	<b>\$20,064.69</b>
<b>General Production Costs</b>	
<i>Negative insurance</i>	\$444.20
<i>Liability insurance</i>	\$401.76
<i>Payroll taxes</i>	\$615.24
<i>Union fees</i>	\$222.50
<i>Film storage</i>	\$272.70
<i>MPAA Seal costs</i>	\$700
<i>Other (settlement with union)</i>	\$5,000
<i>Still processing</i>	\$896.57
	<b>\$8,552.97</b>
<b>Other Costs:</b>	
<i>Legal fees</i>	\$3,875
<i>Accounting fees</i>	\$1,000
<i>Office supplies</i>	\$102.77
<i>Telephone</i>	\$187.96
<i>Secretaries</i>	\$121.70
<i>Office rent</i>	\$791.31
<i>Misc.</i>	\$386.04
<i>Christmas expenses</i>	\$85.50
	<b>\$6,550.28</b>

<b>Talent:</b>		
	<i>Contract and bit players</i>	\$3,551.45
	<i>Extras</i>	\$430
	<i>Dubbing</i>	\$320
		<b>\$4,301.45</b>
<b>Lab Costs:</b>		
	<i>Raw stock</i>	\$5,667.35
	<i>Lab costs</i>	\$7,939.60
	<i>Titles</i>	\$414.11
		<b>\$14,021.06</b>
<b>Recording:</b>		
	<i>Sound effects</i>	\$1,846.60
	<i>Recording and mixing</i>	\$11,195.25
		<b>\$13,041.85</b>
<b>Music:</b>		
	<i>Musicians</i>	\$3,894.52
	<i>Arranging and orchestra</i>	\$600
	<i>Copyist</i>	\$500
		<b>\$4,994.52</b>
<b>Editing:</b>		
	<i>Editors/Cutters</i>	\$1,727.40
	<i>Projection</i>	\$587.98
	<i>Negative cutting</i>	\$2,570.96
	<i>Equipment rental</i>	\$1,558.94
	<i>Cutting room supplies</i>	\$32.65
		<b>\$6,477.93</b>
<b>Travel and Transport:</b>		
	<i>Rent of truck</i>	\$871.39
	<i>Taxi, oil, gas, repairs</i>	\$1,169.83
	<i>Other fares and delivery</i>	\$190.27
		<b>\$2,231.49</b>
<b>Subsistence:</b>		<b>\$638.50</b>
<b>Studio and Equipment:</b>		
	<i>Studio rental</i>	\$904.75
	<i>Cost/rental of sets</i>	\$392.88
	<i>Cost/rental of props and costumes</i>	\$3,316.75
	<i>Maintenance and rental of camera</i>	\$13,527.12
	<i>Location rental</i>	\$2,440
		<b>\$20,581.50</b>
<b>Personnel:</b>		
	<i>Production manager</i>	\$1,893.59
	<i>Cameraman</i>	\$2,425.36
	<i>Electrician/grips</i>	\$2,687.47
	<i>Sound men</i>	\$407.52
	<i>Script clerk</i>	\$385.07
		<b>\$7,799.01</b>
<b>Grand Total:</b>		<b>\$89,190.56</b>

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Acronyms:

BAA, UoL = Brian Aldiss Archives, University of Liverpool

KDP, WHIFTP = Kirk Douglas Papers, Wisconsin Historical Society Film and Television Papers

MHL, AMPAS = Margaret Herrick Library, Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences

SKA, UAL = Stanley Kubrick Archive, University of the Arts London

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*Bandido*, 1956, dir. Richard Fleischer, USA: United Artists.

*Barry Lyndon*, 1975, dir. Stanley Kubrick, UK/USA: Warner Bros.

*The Basketball Fix*, 1951, dir. Felix E. Feist, USA: Realart Pictures.

*Batteries Not Included*, 1987, dir. Matthew Robbins, USA: Universal.

*Battle of Britain*, 1969, dir. Guy Hamilton, UK: United Artists.

*The Big Bluff*, 1955, dir. W. Lee Wilder, USA: United Artists.

*The Big Night*, 1951, dir. Joseph Losey, USA: United Artists.

*The Black Hussar/Der schwarze Husar*, 1932, dir. Gerhard Lamprecht: UFA.

*Black Tuesday*, 1954, dir. Hugo Fregonese, USA: United Artists.

*Blackboard Jungle*, 1955, dir. Richard Brooks, USA: Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer.

*Blade Runner*, 1982, dir. Ridley Scott, USA: Warner Bros.

*The Blue Angel/Der blaue Engel*, 1930, dir. Josef von Sternberg, Germany: UFA/Paramount Pictures.

*Bonnie and Clyde*, 1967, dir. Arthur Penn, USA: Warner Bros.  
*The Boss*, 1956, dir. Byron Haskin, USA: United Artists.  
*Breathless/à bout de souffle*, 1960, dir. Jean-Luc Godard, France: UGC.  
*The Brass Legend*, 1956, dir. Gerd Oswald, USA: United Artists.  
*The Bridge on the River Kwai*, 1957, dir. David Lean, UK/USA: Columbia.  
*Brotherly Love/Country Dance*, 1970, dir. J. Lee Thompson, UK/USA.  
*The Brute/El Bruto*, 1953, dir. Luis Buñuel, Mexico: Columbia.  
*By Love Possessed*, 1961, dir. John Sturges, USA: United Artists.  
*Candy*, 1968, dir. Christian Marquand, USA: Cinerama.  
*The Cardinal*, 1963, dir. Otto Preminger, USA: Columbia.  
*The Careless Years*, 1957, dir. Arthur Hiller, USA: United Artists.  
*Chicago Calling*, 1951, dir. John Reinhardt, USA: United Artists.  
*Chungking Express*, 1994, dir. Wong Kar-wai, Hong Kong: Jet Tone.  
*Cleopatra*, 1963, dir. Joseph L. Mankiewicz, USA: 20<sup>th</sup> Century-Fox.  
*A Clockwork Orange*, 1971, dir. Stanley Kubrick, UK/USA.  
*Close Encounters of the Third Kind*, 1977, dir. Steven Spielberg, USA: Columbia.  
*Cool Hand Luke*, 1967, dir. Stuart Rosenberg, USA: Warner Bros.  
*Cop*, 1988, dir. James B. Harris, USA: Atlantic Releasing Corporation.  
*Cowboy G-Men*, 1952-1953, USA: Telemount-Mutual.  
*Crime of Passion*, 1957, dir. Gerd Oswald, USA: United Artists.  
*The Crimson Pirate*, 1952, dir. Robert Siodmark, USA: Warner Bros.  
*Daredevil*, 2003, dir. Mark Steven Johnson, USA: Twentieth Century Fox.  
*Day of the Fight*, 1951, dir. Stanley Kubrick, USA: RKO Radio Pictures.  
*Death in Venice*, 1971, dir. Luchino Visconti, Italy/France: Warner Bros.  
*Deliverance*, 1972, dir. John Boorman, USA: Warner Bros.  
*The Devils*, 1971, dir. Ken Russell, UK: Warner Bros.  
*Dirty Harry*, 1971, dir. Don Siegel, USA: Warner Bros.  
*Doctor Zhivago*, 1965, dir. David Lean, UK/Italy: Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer.  
*Dog Day Afternoon*, 1975, dir. Sidney Lumet, USA: Warner Bros.  
*Dr. Strangelove or: How I Learned to Stop Worrying and Love the Bomb*, 1964, dir. Stanley Kubrick, UK/USA: Columbia.  
*Dragon's Gold*, 1954, dir. Aubrey Wisberg, USA: United Artists.

*Duel*, 1971, dir. Steven Spielberg, USA: Universal.  
*Dunkirk*, 2017, dir. Christopher Nolan, USA: Warner Bros.  
*Easy Rider*, 1969, dir. Dennis Hopper, USA: Columbia.  
*Empire of the Sun*, 1987, dir. Steven Spielberg, USA: Warner Bros.  
*The Empire Strikes Back*, 1981, dir. Irvin Kershner, USA: 20<sup>th</sup> Century-Fox.  
*E.T. the Extra-Terrestrial*, 1982, dir. Steven Spielberg, Universal.  
*The Exorcist*, 1973, dir. William Friedkin, USA: Warner Bros.  
*Eyes Wide Shut*, 1999, dir. Stanley Kubrick, USA: Warner Bros.  
*Fail Safe*, 1964, dir. Sidney Lumet, USA: Columbia.  
*Fast Walking*, 1982, dir. James B. Harris, USA: Lorimar Productions.  
*Fear and Desire*, 1953, dir. Stanley Kubrick, USA: Joseph Burstyn.  
*The Fighter*, 1952, dir. Herbert Kline, USA: United Artists.  
*First Men in the Moon*, 1964, dir. Nathan H. Juran, UK: Columbia.  
*The Flying Padre*, 1951, dir. Stanley Kubrick, USA: RKO Radio Pictures.  
*The Fourth Sex*, 1961, dir. Alfonso Gimeno, France: Audubon Films.  
*Full Metal Jacket*, 1987, dir. Stanley Kubrick, USA: Warner Bros.  
*The Godfather*, 1972, dir. Francis Ford Coppola, USA: Paramount.  
*Good Neighbor Sam*, 1964, dir. David Swift, USA: Columbia.  
*The Graduate*, 1967, dir. Mike Nichols, USA: United Artists.  
*The Great Escape*, 1963, dir. John Sturges, USA: United Artists.  
*Gremlins*, 1984, dir. Joe Dante, USA: Warner Bros.  
*Guerrilla Girl*, 1953, dir. John Christian, USA: United Artists.  
*The Higher Command/Der höhere Befehl*, 1935, Gerhard Lamprecht, Germany: UFA.  
*How the West Was Won*, 1962, dir. John Ford, USA: Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer.  
*In the Street*, 1948, dir. Helen Levitt, James Agee, Janice Loeb, USA.  
*The Indian Fighter*, 1955, dir. Andre DeToth, USA: United Artists.  
*Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade*, 1989, dir. Steven Spielberg, USA: Lucasfilm.  
*Jaws*, 1975, dir. Steven Spielberg, USA: Universal.  
*Jew Süß*, 1940, dir. Veit Harlan, Germany: Terra Film.  
*Jurassic Park*, 1993, dir. Steven Spielberg, USA: Universal.  
*Kansas City Confidential*, 1952, dir. Phil Karlson, USA: United Artists.  
*The Kentuckian*, 1955, dir. Burt Lancaster, USA: United Artists.

*The Killer is Loose*, 1956, dir. Budd Boetticher, USA: United Artists.  
*Killer's Kiss*, 1955, dir. Stanley Kubrick, USA: United Artists.  
*The Killing*, 1956, dir. Stanley Kubrick, USA: United Artists.  
*A Kiss Before Dying*, 1956, dir. Gerd Oswald, USA: United Artists.  
*Kiss Me Deadly*, 1955, dir. Robert Aldrich, USA: United Artists.  
*Kiss the Blood Off My Hands*, 1948, dir. Norman Foster, USA: Universal.  
*Klute*, 1971, dir. Alan J. Pakula, USA: Warner Bros.  
*Kolberg*, 1945, dir. Veit Harlan, Germany: UFA.  
*The Last Command*, 1955, dir. Frank Lloyd, USA: Republic Pictures.  
*Lawrence of Arabia*, 1962, dir. David Lean, UK/USA: Columbia.  
*The Libertine*, 1969, dir. Pasquale Festa Campanile, France: Audubon Films.  
*Little Fugitive*, 1953, dir. Ray Ashley, Morris Engel, and Ruth Orkin, USA: Joseph Burstyn.  
*Lizzie*, 1957, dir. Hugo Haas, USA: Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer.  
*Lolita*, 1962, dir. Stanley Kubrick, UK/USA: Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer.  
*Lust for Life*, 1956, dir. Vincente Minnelli, USA: Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer.  
*Mad Max*, 1979, dir. George Miller, Australia: Roadshow Entertainment.  
*The Magic Christian*, 1969, dir. Joseph McGrath, UK: Commonwealth United Corporation.  
*The Magnificent Seven*, 1960, dir. John Sturges, USA: United Artists.  
*Making the Shining*, 1980, dir. Vivian Kubrick, UK: British Broadcasting Corporation.  
*The Maltese Falcon*, 1941, dir. John Huston, USA: Warner Bros.  
*The Man Between*, 1953, dir. Carol Reed, UK: United Artists.  
*Manhunter*, 1986, dir. Michael Mann, USA: De Laurentiis Entertainment Group.  
*The Man With the Golden Arm*, 1955, dir. Otto Preminger, USA: United Artists.  
*Man With the Gun*, 1955, dir. Richard Wilson, USA: United Artists.  
*Marty*, 1955, dir. Delbert Mann, USA: United Artists.  
*Metropolis*, 1927, dir. Fritz Lang, Germany: UFA.  
*Midnight Cowboy*, 1969, dir. John Schlesinger, USA: United Artists.  
*The Misfits*, 1961, dir. John Huston, USA: United Artists.  
*Moby Dick*, 1956, dir. John Huston, USA: Warner Bros.  
*The Moon is Blue*, 1953, dir. Otto Preminger, USA: United Artists.

*Mother, Jugs & Speed*, 1976, dir. Peter Yates, USA: 20<sup>th</sup> Century-Fox.  
*The Naked City*, 1948, dir. Jules Dassin, USA: Universal.  
*Napoleon*, 1927, dir. Abel Gance, France: Gaumont.  
*Nelson*, 1918, dir. Maurice Elvey, UK.  
*Nelson*, 1926, dir. Walter Summers, UK: British Instructional Films.  
*The Night of the Hunter*, 1955, dir. Charles Laughton, USA: United Artists.  
*No Name on the Bullet*, 1959, dir. Jack Arnold, USA: Universal.  
*Not As A Stranger*, 1955, dir. Stanley Kramer, USA: United Artists.  
*Ocean's Eleven*, 1960, dir. Lewis Milestone, USA: Warner Bros.  
*On the Bowery*, 1956, dir. Lionel Rogosin, USA: Milestone Films.  
*One-Eyed Jacks*, 1961, dir. Marlon Brando, USA: Paramount.  
*Paths of Glory*, 1957, dir. Stanley Kubrick, USA.  
*Performance*, 1970, dir. Nicholas Roeg, UK: Warner Bros.  
*The Prisoner*, 1967-1968, UK: ITV.  
*Psyche 59*, 1964, dir. Alexander Singer, USA: Troy-Schenk Productions.  
*Psycho*, 1960, dir. Alfred Hitchcock, USA: Paramount.  
*The Quick Gun*, 1964, dir. Sidney Salkow, USA: Columbia.  
*The Quiet One*, 1948, dir. Sidney Meyers, USA: Arthur Mayer & Joseph Burstyn.  
*Raging Bull*, 1980, dir. Martin Scorsese, USA: United Artists.  
*Raiders of the Lost Ark*, 1981, dir. Steven Spielberg, USA: Paramount.  
*Raiders of the Seven Seas*, 1953, dir. Sidney Salkow, USA: United Artists.  
*The Rains of Ranchipur*, 1955, dir. Jean Negulesco, USA: 20<sup>th</sup> Century-Fox.  
*Rear Window*, 1954, dir. Alfred Hitchcock, USA: Paramount.  
*The Red Badge of Courage*, 1951, dir. John Huston, USA: Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer.  
*Reflections in a Golden Eye*, 1967, dir. John Huston, USA: Warner Bros.  
*Return of the Jedi*, 1983, dir. Richard Marquand, USA: 20<sup>th</sup> Century-Fox.  
*Ride Out For Revenge*, 1957, dir. Bernard Girard, USA: United Artists.  
*Rififi*, 1955, dir. Jules Dassin, France: Pathé.  
*Robber's Roost*, 1955, dir. Sidney Salkow, USA: United Artists.  
*The Robe*, 1953, dir. Henry Koster, USA: 20<sup>th</sup> Century-Fox.  
*RoboCop*, 1987, dir. Paul Verhoeven, USA: Orion Pictures.  
*Rocky*, 1976, dir. John G. Avildsen, USA: United Artists.

*The Roman Spring of Mrs Stone*, 1961, dir. José Quintero, UK: Warner Bros.  
*Samson and Delilah*, 1949, dir. Cecil B. DeMille, USA: Paramount.  
*Saturday Night Fever*, 1977, dir. John Badham, USA: Paramount.  
*Schindler's List*, 1993, dir. Steven Spielberg, USA: Universal.  
*The Seafarers*, 1953, dir. Stanley Kubrick, USA: Seafarers International Union.  
*The Seducers*, 1962, dir. Graeme Ferguson, USA: Joseph Brenner.  
*The Sergeant*, 1968, dir. John Flynn, USA: Warner Bros.  
*The Seven Samurai*, 1954, dir. Akira Kurosawa, Japan: Toho.  
*Shadows*, 1959, dir. John Cassavetes, USA: British Lion.  
*The Shining*, 1980, dir. Stanley Kubrick, UK/USA: Warner Bros.  
*Shotgun*, 1955, dir. Lesley Selander, USA: Allied Artists.  
*Some Like It Hot*, 1959, dir. Billy Wilder, USA: United Artists.  
*The Sound of Music*, 1965, dir. Robert Wise, USA: 20<sup>th</sup> Century-Fox.  
*Spartacus*, 1960, dir. Stanley Kubrick, USA: Universal.  
*Spring Reunion*, 1957, dir. Robert Pirosh, USA: Republic Pictures.  
*Star Trek: Generations*, 1994, dir. David Carson, USA: Paramount.  
*Star Wars*, 1977, dir. George Lucas, USA: 20<sup>th</sup> Century-Fox.  
*Stop*, 1970, dir. Bill Gunn, USA: Warner Bros.  
*Strangers When We Meet*, 1960, dir. Richard Quine, USA: Columbia.  
*Summer of 42*, 1971, dir. Robert Mulligan, USA: Warner Bros.  
*Telecomics*, 1950-51, USA: NBC.  
*Ten Tall Men*, 1951, dir. Willis Goldbeck, USA: Columbia.  
*The Terminator*, 1984, dir. James Cameron, USA: Orion Pictures.  
*Terror in a Texas Town*, 1958, dir. Joseph Lewis, USA: United Artists.  
*The Thief*, 1952, dir. Russell Rouse, USA: United Artists.  
*The Third Man*, 1949, dir. Carol Reed, UK: British Lion Film Corporation.  
*THX 1138*, 1971, dir. George Lucas, USA: Warner Bros.  
*Timberjack*, 1955, dir. Joseph Kane, USA: Republic Pictures.  
*Time Limit*, 1957, dir. Karl Malden, USA: United Artists.  
*A Time Out of War*, 1954, dir. Denis Sanders, USA: Carnival Productions.  
*Timetable*, 1956, dir. Mark Stevens, USA: United Artists.  
*Tommy*, 1975, dir. Ken Russell, UK: Columbia.

*Top Gun*, 1955, dir. Ray Nazarro, USA: United Artists.  
*20,000 Leagues Under the Sea*, 1954, dir. Richard Fleischer, USA: Walt Disney.  
*The Twilight Girls*, 1956, dir. André Hunnebell, France: La Société des Films Sirius.  
*2001: A Space Odyssey*, 1968, dir. Stanley Kubrick, UK/USA: Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer.  
*2010*, 1984, dir. Peter Hyams, USA: Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer.  
*Two for the Seesaw*, 1962, dir. Robert Wise, USA: United Artists.  
*The Vampire*, 1957, dir. Paul Landres, USA: United Artists.  
*Vera Cruz*, 1954, dir. Robert Aldrich, USA: United Artists.  
*Vice Squad*, 1953, dir. Arnold Laven, USA: United Artists.  
*The Victors*, 1963, dir. Carl Foreman, USA/UK: Columbia.  
*The Vikings*, 1958, dir. Richard Fleischer, USA: United Artists.  
*The V.I.P.S.*, 1963, dir. Anthony Asquith, UK: Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer.  
*Vertigo*, 1958, dir. Alfred Hitchcock, USA: Paramount.  
*War and Peace*, 1966-67, dir. Sergei Bondarchuk, Russian: Mosfilm.  
*Waterloo*, 1929, dir. Karl Grune, Germany: Bavaria Film.  
*Waterloo*, 1970, dir. Sergei Bondarchuk, Italy/Russia: Paramount.  
*West Side Story*, 1961, dir. Robert Wise and Jerome Robbins, USA: United Artists.  
*White Heat*, 1949, dir. Raoul Walsh, USA: Warner Bros.  
*The Wild and the Innocent*, 1959, dir. Jack Sher, USA: Universal.  
*The Wild Bunch*, 1969, dir. Sam Peckinpah, USA: Warner Bros.  
*Wise Blood*, 1979, dir. John Huston, USA: New Line Cinema.  
*Woodstock*, 1970, dir. Michael Wadleigh, USA: Warner Bros.